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THE

HISTORY

OF

FRANCE,

DURING THE REIGNS OF

FRANCIS II. and CHARLES IX.

TO WHICH IS PREFIXED,

A REVIEW of the GENERAL HISTORY of the MONARCHY, from its Origin to that Period:

COMPREHENDING

An Account of the various Revolutions, political Government, Laws and Cuſtoms of the Nation.

By WALTER ANDERSON, D. D.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

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THE

PREFACE.

IN eſtimating the ſubjects of hiſtory, that of the antient *monarchy* of *France* may be reckoned one of the moſt curious and entertaining. Comprehending the reigns of the deſcendants of *Merovë*, of *Charlemagne*, and of *Hugh Capet*, it affords different views of the political government, and of the character and genius of the French nation. The detail of its revolutions holds forth a picture of thoſe changes, which have befallen every Gothic kingdom in Europe. Such as are acquainted with the antient hiſtory of the Britiſh monarchy, will readily diſcover the reſemblance which the cuſtoms and laws of the *Franks* bear to thoſe of the *Saxons*; and obſerve the ſimilar predominancy and decline of the *feudal* government in both nations.

PRESUMING that the inveſtigation of the antient hiſtory of a nation, ſo celebrated as the French, might prove acceptable to the publick, the author has endeavoured

to comprehend it in a review of the political revolutions and general hiſtory of the monarchy prefixed to the following work; and to illuſtrate it further by ſome diſſertations in the particular narrative given of the reigns of Francis II. and Charles IX. This period of the civil commotions the author choſe for his main ſubject, as the agitation then produced in the French ſtate, furniſhes the largeſt field for political reflections, and alſo for the diſcuſſion of ſeveral curious points relative to the conſtitution and cuſtoms of the monarchy. In theſe reigns, the recent controverſy about the toleration of the proteſtants, and the reformation of the church, being blended with political faction; ſucceſſive conventions of the *Nobles* and aſſemblies of the *ſtates* are ſummoned, in order to reſtrain the growing diſſenſions.

BESIDES that the events in the reigns of Francis II. and Charles IX. are ſo various and important as to render the particular explication of them entertaining; many military and political characters, which deſerve to be illuſtrated, remarkably diſtinguiſh that period of the antient hiſtory of France. In it, *Catherine* of *Medicis* fully diſplays her celebrated genius; and the chancellor *de l'Hoſpital* exerts his legiſlative and patriotic talents, for the benefit of his country; while a number of eminent

warriors vie with one another in martial renown, and ſhew their characters moulded to the temper of the age, or brightened, more or leſs, according to their different natural qualities and endowments. By giving ſuch a compaſs to the narration of facts, as might ſufficiently exhibit the characters, the author hopes that he may have rendered the military part of the French civil wars, no leſs intereſting and pathetic than the political. By more conciſeneſs he ſhould have deſpaired of ſucceeding in this aim.

From a glance of the *foreign hiſtory* coinciding with the period which is treated of in the following work, it will alſo appear how diſtinguiſhable and important an æra of the antient hiſtory of Europe is comprehended in it. The ſignal reigns of Philip II. of Spain, and of Elizabeth of England, are opened at this period. The diſcontents of the people of the Netherlands, under the yoke of Spain, commence---The famous council of Trent is held, and concluded---A Spaniſh army is led by the duke of *Alva* into the Low Countries, and his remarkable campaigns there are finiſhed---The queen of Scotland is expelled from her kingdom, and brought to a moſt extraordinary trial in England---The heir of Spain, by his father's order, is condemned, and put to death--Malta

is beſieged by the Turkiſh Emperor *Solyman* the Great, and Cyprus taken by *Selim* II.---The memorable ſea battle of *Lepanto* is fought---A ſon of France is elected king of Poland---Such a detail of theſe cotemporary events is given in the following hiſtory, as their moment and grandeur ſeemed to require.

The authorities and vouchers, conſulted in the compilement of this hiſtory, are marked with exactneſs. In the more intricate parts of it, reſpecting the *Feudal* government, the conſtitution of the *States General* of the kingdom, and of the parliaments of France, the author, believing it would give more ſatisfaction to the generality of readers, has cited ſeveral of the beſt modern French writers, together with others of more antient and venerable authority. Without preſuming, under the ſhade of ſome dark hiſtorians, to throw out conjectures, or to vent ſyſtematic notions of his own; he has diligently compared the ableſt of theſe writers together; and, without adopting the fallacies of a ſyſtem unwarily embraced by any of them, has avoided advancing not only what is falſe, but what appears doubtful and uncertain.

The hiſtorical account of the riſe and progreſs of the reformation in France, which forms a part of the following work, may be allowed to be in itſelf an affecting

and

and inſtructive ſubject. Scarcely does any one, that falls within the bounds of hiſtory, more diſplay the energy of the human mind, and the ſurprizing combination of its different motives and paſſions. How far the characters of the catholic and proteſtant partizans are deſcribed with juſtice and impartiality by the author, and the other parts of his extenſive ſubject executed with propriety, he ſubmits, with all deference, to the diſcerning publick.

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THE HISTORY of FRANCE.

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THE *Franks*, a nation who had ſettled on the German ſide of the Rhine, and with other Gothic tribes, had often invaded Gaul in the decline of the Roman empire, at length in the end of the fifth century, made an entire conqueſt of a great part of it, under Clovis, their prince or chief. His predeceſſors in the regal rank and function, *Pharamond, Clodion* Chriſtian æra, A. D. 491.

PART I. *Merovee* and *Childeric*, are reckoned to have paved the way to his ſucceſs in this ſignal enterprize, to which his turning Chriſtian alſo contributed. This fierce and barbarous people, whoſe views and conſultations were applied to a few fixed objects; their common defence, their military expeditions, the preſervation of their cattle and flocks, and the diſtribution of their ſlaves and ſpoils; conceived no higher ideas of the royalty, or of a ſupreme political authority among them, than were natural to a rude community of ſoldiers; who retained the cuſtom of chooſing their chief from a particular tribe, and ſhared with him, and the principal officers of his train, the prizes of war and conqueſt.

THAT liberty in its utmoſt latitude and exceſs prevailed amongſt all thoſe vagrant ſwarms of people, which iſſued from the northern regions of Europe in ſearch of new ſettlements, is certain and obvious. We find it more difficult to trace their uſages and cuſtoms, and to comprehend their political order, than to be ſatisfied about their freedom and independency. For want of the eſſential ties of government, whole nations of them, as hiſtory informs us, were loſt; or altogether diſſipated in thoſe countries which they had overpowered. In what manner the conquered lands were ſeized and divided by them, what arrangements political and civil they aſſumed; how far they adhered to their former inſtitutions, or deviated from them, after acquiring an extenſive dominion; cannot often be collected with certainty, or underſtood with preciſion, from the remaining annals and records of their hiſtory.

FORTUNATE in having ſubſiſted together by an union of their tribes for ſome conſiderable time, and under a mode of regal government; the Franks had uſages and cuſtoms that prevailed

among the nations of a German original. By an accurate inſpection into their Salic and Ripuarian laws, which after the conqueſt of Gaul were publiſhed in the Latin language, and from other authorities, ſome late French writers have removed the obſcurity in which the hiſtory of the origin of their monarchy had been long involved, and which the preſumption and ſyſtematic notions or prejudices of other modern writers ſtill endeavoured to perplex. Every reader knows the celebrated author, to whom the French nation is indebted for an ingenious theory upon this ſubject. PART I.

Political cuſtoms and uſages of the Franks.

WITH reſpect to the political eſtabliſhment of the Franks in Gaul, ſo far as it is unfolded by the beſt authors, the following particulars here require to be remarked. All the lands were not ſeized upon by the Franks; ſuch a portion of them only, as they could occupy, being taken from the Romans and Gauls. What domains or particular poſſeſſions of land individuals laid hold upon, were * patrimonial, diviſible and hereditary, and were denominated Salic lands. Thoſe were diſtinguiſhed from the larger tracts of territory reſerved for the ſupport of the king, and to be beſtowed as gifts among the men of his retinue †. Whatever their original was, the Franks had an order of perſons among them called Antruſtions and Leudes, from their being admitted into the council, or immediate attendance of the king, and taking an oath of fidelity to him. On thoſe perſons the honorary diſtinctions, and the chief employments, military and civil, were conferred, and to them territorial grants and aſſignments were made, which after-

* Henault Abregé Chron. oct. edit. a Paris, p. 81. L'Eſprit des Loix, liv. xviii. chap. 22. † Ibid. liv. xxx. chap. 16.

PART I. wards obtained the name of benefices or fiefs *. But all appointments to offices, and the conceſſions of ſuch fiſcal lands and emoluments were, at firſt, temporary and revocable at the pleaſure of the king. This was not ſo much an evidence of the authority of the prince, as of the unſettled ſtate of the government. The dignities and charges could only be precarious and perſonal in a nation like the Franks, who having barely pitched the ſeat of their dominion, were engaged in conſtant broils, and liable to ſudden revolutions †. The rendezvous of their military camp in March formed the great hinge of their political conſtitution, and in it ſupreme juriſdiction and authority only reſided. The branches of power exerciſed by the king and his council of Leudes were, in reſpect of it, only proviſional, and chiefly relative to the immediate exigencies of the government. When thoſe general aſſemblies were intermitted, we find the nation thrown into confuſion.

The royalty divided among the ſons of Clovis.

AFTER the death of Clovis, his four ſons, who had fought under him, and ſhared in the military toils and victories, became ſeparate kings of Metz, Paris, Soiſons and Orleans ‡. This partition of the royalty and of their conqueſts ſhowed the genius of the Franks. Their Salic and Ripuarian uſages, calculated only to prevent immediate diſcords and preſent inconveniencies, conveyed to them no ideas or principles for the aggrandizement of their royal family, or even the eſtabliſhment of one united kingdom. Dependant on the precarious choice of an aſſembly of warriors, with whom every rule about the ſucceſſion to the crown, except that of the excluſion of females, was undefined and

* Paſquier, liv. ii. chap. 15. † Le Gendre, p. 4.

‡ Recherches de la France, par Paſquier, fol. edit. liv. ii. chap. 1.

variable;

PART I.

variable; the ſons of Clovis and their ſucceſſors graſped the royalty by parts, when any of their kindred might be advanced to it, and none of them could reckon with confidence on the enjoyment of the whole. The Leudes found that a multiplication of honorary offices attended the ſharing of the conquered dominions among the offspring of the royal blood, and the bulk of the Franks regardleſs for which of them they fought, ſupported variouſly one or other of theſe imperfect figures of royalty; as boldneſs in war, fortune, or even the atrocious and criminal enterpriſes of the times recommended them. In this manner, the unſtable principalities already mentioned, alternately grew up or diminiſhed, and were disjoined or re-united again. In circumſtances of political and civil diſtraction, ſimilar to the condition of the Saxon heptarchy in England; with a greater ſhare of ferocity in their manners, and leſs policy in their laws than the Saxons ſhowed; it * ſeems a paradox not eaſily accounted for, that the Franks, environned with the Viſigoths and Burgundians, and other barbarous nations, in a courſe of two hundred years, eſcaped being overwhelmed by ſuch enemies, or falling a prey to their inteſtine quarrels.

THOUGH conjunctures and incidents of the times, that are rather gueſſed at than well known in the hiſtory of the Franks, had contributed more perhaps than their warlike proweſs and ſuperior bravery, to preſerve and maintain their eſtabliſhment in France under their Merovingian kings; the royal power itſelf altogether weak in its original, and unſettled on any proper baſis, even when there happened a re-union of its branches, continued to decline,

The royalty confounded with the office of the mayors of the palace.

* Ibid.

and

PART I.

and was at length confounded with that of the mayors of the palace *. This office, like others, at firſt diſpoſed of by the kings, as it grew up in political dignity and importance, was often filled up by the ableſt or moſt enterpriſing courtiers. The ſervices military and civil performed by the mayors, in the nonage or imbecillity of their kings, rendering their function of general importance, it was made elective, and on that account became more acceptable and popular among the Franks. No more was requiſite than the appearance of ſuch mayors as Charles Martel and the Pepins, to diveſt the Merovingians of their diadem and nominal dignity, which had been already often vilified and debaſed in the eyes of the Franks, by the confinement of their perſons to their palaces, or to the walls of a cloiſter. Beſides the little attachment of the Franks to their kings, the political conduct of ſome of the mayors may point out one material ſource of quarrel and contention with them. Having often conferred the offices, and beſtowed the fiſcal emoluments on the Leudes and chief men, who would not own the obligation by obedience; the kings were inclined to make either neceſſary or capricious retractions and changes of their gifts; and ſuch of them as had foreſight and reſolution avoided granting employments and benefices for life, or endeavoured to reſume ſuch donations. The powerful and popular dukes and counts ſtruggled to retain the poſſeſſion they had, and by importunity or power frequently prevailed †. It was the policy of the mayors to conform to the poſture of affairs, and to gratify the nobility with the continuation and permanency of the grants they had obtained. Charles Martel did more. He underſtood how to improve on this

* Paſquier, liv. ii. chap. 11.

† L'Eſprit des Loix, liv. xxx. chap. 6.

ſyſtem

ſyſtem of indulgence, and to turn it to his advantage. Having enriched himſelf by ſtripping the church, he conſtituted a number of new benefices in the room of thoſe detached from the crown, and made gifts of them to the officers of his army; it is likely for life, and on ſome expreſs ſtipulations of military ſervice, which were not required by the kings. Whether, according to a late author, who cites his authorities at large *, we may juſtly aſcribe to thoſe grants of Charles Martel, the firſt form and eſtabliſhment of the feudal and military tenures of land, or what are properly called fiefs; it appears evident, that this is the period in which the ſeeds and principles of that conſtitution began to take root among the Franks.

Inveſtigation of the origin of feudal tenures and vaſſalages.

THE origin of feudal vaſſalage is a part of the antient hiſtory of France, which has been canvaſſed by ſeveral of the ableſt modern writers of that nation. Their wide diſagreement, and the various ſyſtems eſpouſed by them, prove the ambiguity and darkneſs of the ſubject †. The count de Boulainvilliers' hypotheſis, that the Franks, in their conqueſt of Gaul, reduced the inhabitants to a ſtate of ſervitude, and turned their territorial poſſeſſions into military tenures or fiefs, is juſtly rejected as repugnant to hiſtory. What the Abbe du Bos has advanced, in his account of the antient monarchy of the Franks, appears to be an induſtrious perverſion of all the antient records, and even contrary to common probability. The inveſtiture of Clovis and his ſucceſſors, with the ſovereign rights and prerogatives of the Roman emperors, and the immediate ſubmiſſion of the Franks to the laws and policy of

* L'Abbe de Mably Obſerv. ſur L'Hiſtoire de France, liv. i. chap. 6.

† Herault Abbregé Chron. p. 35.

the

PART I. the conquered ſtate; are the preſumptions of his chimerical ſyſtem, in which the Franks, in the ſame manner as the Romans and Gauls, are repreſented as yielding themſelves the tame vaſſals of their Merovingian princes. The celebrated author of the Spirit of Laws has expoſed and corrected thoſe capital miſtakes *. After obſerving the ſimilitude of the Salic laws and uſages to thoſe of the antient Germans deſcribed by Tacitus, he deduces the origin of vaſſalage from a cuſtom, in which the German princes placed their chief dignity; that of being ſurrounded always with a number of principal aſſociates or companions, who were ſolemnly engaged to follow them in their warlike enterpriſes. To thoſe ſelect warriors the chiefs preſented war-horſes and arms, and entertained them at their repaſts. They are preſumed, then, to have been ſuch vaſſals as the princes could retain in a nation which cultivated no lands. As nations ignorant and uncivilized are known to perſevere in the ſame train of uſages and manners; it may be allowed that the order of the Antruſtions or Leudes among the Franks is, in this manner, ſpeciouſly accounted for. They correſpond to the *comites* of the German chiefs, in the choice made of them by the kings of the Franks, in their being bound to faithful ſervice, and being recompenced with the grants of the fiſcal or public benefices.

BUT the main difficulty, in the queſtion about the conſtitution of a fief and military vaſſalage, ſtill remains unexplained. The rank, office and obligation of the Antruſtions were without doubt both previous to the erection of fiefs, and diſtinct from the grant of them. The Leudes or truſty men, ſays † the author of the

* L'Eſprit des Loix, liv. xxx. chap. 3. † Ibid. chap. 25.

Spirit of Laws, were ſuch, not as being the king's beneficiaries, or becauſe they were poſſeſſors of fiefs, but in conſequence of their being Antruſtions, or men advanced to that particular rank in the community, the fiefs or territorial grants were beſtowed on them. In this ſtate of the argument, the queſtion ſtill reverts, and doubts with regard to it multiply. Did Clovis, in taking poſſeſſion of the conquered lands in Gaul, invent and introduce a new tie of ſubordination, which till then was unuſual and unprecedented among the Franks? Were the Leudes, already obliged to faithful ſervice, again required to vow fealty for the precarious tenure of their fiefs? When the nation had obtained a ſuperfluity of territory, and allowed the * vanquiſhed people to remain in poſſeſſion of what was unoccupied; could the temporary gift of a portion of it be deemed of worth or importance, ſufficient to conſtitute an additional mode of fealty, and found a peculiar obligation to military ſervice beyond what was preſcribed to the Leudes; who enjoyed other lucrative functions and emoluments in the ſtate? Thoſe ſuppoſitions, altogether improbable in themſelves, are unſupported by any proper authority †. There appear no vouchers or documents from the chartularies of the Merovingian kings, which prove the territorial grants made by them to be any other than ſimple benefices. With the more reaſon they may be preſumed to have been of this kind; if the gifts and preſents the German princes beſtowed on their followers be deemed the pattern of them. Thoſe liberalities were plainly debts on the chiefs, and part of the pay their companions received, and not ſpecial obligation to fealty ‡. Conſidered as being the appenage

* Ibid. chap. 8. † L'Abbé de Mably, tom i. p. 361.

‡ L'Eſprit des Loix, ibid. chap. 16.

PART I. of the whole community of the Franks, the particular diſtribution of which was left in the hands of the prince for the recompence of the loyal ſervice, and the diſtinguiſhed valour of his Leudes; the original donations of the fiſcal lands ſeem evidently to have been free gifts, which formed no ſpecial eſtabliſhment of military tenures and vaſſalages.

AMONG the Franks, who were a nation of militia, and in that reſpect chiefly diſtinguiſhed from the conquered people; there was no occaſion that any order of them ſhould be bound by a particular engagement, or become the prince's ſworn vaſſals, for the performance of military ſervice. It was ſufficient that the common Franks had their patrimonial domains, and that the Antruſtions, beſides their ſhare of theſe, had the king's gifts, whether in lands or employments, to maintain them on the footing of ſoldiers. The latter, with the new deſignation of dukes and counts, from their ſuperintendance or government of provinces and towns, were not feudal lords, who aſſembled their vaſſals; but officers appointed to have the command and array of the diviſions of the national militia *. The term *fief*, as the learned Du Cange remarks in his Gloſſary, is not found uſed in the antient diplomas or records, till after the acceſſion of the Carlovingian race. That of *vaſſal* †, which originally ſignified a domeſtic officer, began to be applied to a beneficiary, engaged to military duty, only about the time of Charles Martel. Homage was not inſtituted or known for ſome time after that period ‡. The author of the Spirit of Laws, on conjecture, ventures not to find the veſtige of it earlier

* In voce Feudum. Le Gendre, p. 20. † Ibid. in voce Vaſſus.

‡ Liv. xxxi. chap. 32.

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than the reign of Pepin. Feudal vaſſalage may be, therefore, allowed to have formed no part of the primitive policy of the Franks. In every view, it appears to have been a plant of later growth, that aroſe from the failure or wreck of their original conſtitution.

A SLIGHT glance of the annals of the Franks is ſufficient to ſhew, that though a general ſervitude of the ſubjected people, by no means attended their conqueſt of Gaul; the bondage of many individuals accompanied it *. In a long ſeries of revolts, conſpiracies and civil wars, of which the hiſtory of the Merovingian race affords a ſtriking picture; the cuſtom of making captives of the inhabitants of the towns and villages prevailed. This increaſe of bondmen would turn not to the advantage of the ſtate, but to that of particular Leudes, and ſuch chieftains as found it for their intereſts, or agreeable to their ambition, to retain the greateſt number of them within the limits of their domains, or in the diſtricts under their authority. While the territorial benefices of the crown continued precarious, and often changed their poſſeſſors; vaſſalage in them would ſcarce gain the leaſt footing. It's growth would be confined to the domains of the lords, and it's influence would be little felt in the political conſtitution. But when the fiſcal lands were granted, or retained for a courſe of years; the progreſs of ſervitudes being rendered more extenſive, would produce a conſiderable effect. The lords would begin to manumit their ſerfs or bondmen, and form ſoldiers of them, and engage others who ſought their protection, to become their military vaſſals. It is probable, that Charles Martel only put the new

* Ibid. Liv. xxx. chap. 11.

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benefices he formed of the church-lands or tithes on that eſtabliſhment he obſerved taking place in ſome of the antient ones, alienated by the lords. A balance by this means would be fixed in the conſtitution, and the nurſery of vaſſals in the territorial benefices of the crown would counterpoiſe that of the independent fiefs *. Thus were the fiefs founded by Chartel Martel plainly diſtinguiſhed from the original benefices, and thoſe of earlier date. The ſenſible change and revolution which he is ſaid to have made in the latter, may from this explication be well underſtood; and the origin of feudal vaſſalage among the Franks be traced, in a manner conſiſtent with the remaining tracts of their hiſtory, and with the beſt illuſtrations of them by Du Cange and Paſquier, who produce their authorities, without reducing them to the theories of a ſyſtem.

Military and civil inſtitutions, and uſages of the Franks.

IN every nation rude in laws and manners, except where we find religion, or the authority of the prieſts interpoſing, the civil and military powers have been always conjoined and veſted in the ſame perſons. The tribunals are held, and the judgments pronounced by thoſe furniſhed with ability to inforce immediate ſubmiſſion to their deciſions. Hence among the Franks, the dukes, counts, and their vicars or centenarii, had the double commiſſion and employment of commanding the militia, and of adminiſtering juſtice in the provinces and diſtricts of the conquered country. The † judicial office, as well as the military one, was executed by them as deputies of the prince, and his council of Leudes; to whom they were reſponſible in the aſſemblies of the camp of

* Ibid. chap. 7. and 23.

† Henault Abbregé, p. 592. L'Abbe de Mably, tom. i. p. 30. Le Gendre, ibid.

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March. But from ancient cuſtom and uſage the Franks obſerved a method of procedure in juriſdiction, which was conformable to the popular principles of their government, and differed from the ſubſequent inſtitution of the feudal and ſeignioral courts *. To form their tribunals, it was neceſſary to call ſeven aſſeſſors from the Rachinbourgs and Scabins, who were of the common rank of citizens, and together with the Grafios, were accuſtomed to act as the ordinary, or inferior judges of the people. By thoſe aſſeſſors, to which five more were ſometimes added by the judge, the ſentence or verdict was framed. The dukes, counts, or their officers, only pronounced and awarded it. As the Gauls and Romans were allowed to be judged by their own laws, the aſſeſſors either wholly, or in the additional number, were taken from the individuals of the one or the other of theſe nations, when a proceſs was carried on againſt them. It was evidently the ſame judicial procedure with that which obtained among the Saxons in England, and has continued ſince to be the noble and equitable practice of this country in trials by jury.

FROM thoſe out-lines of the hiſtory of the Franks, it appears that their political conſtitution, entirely democratical in its principles, had only ſuch a mixture of the monarchical form, as to ſubſiſt under it after the conqueſt of Gaul †. Until Pepin introduced the religious ceremony of inauguration, their princes were raiſed on a ſhield and proclaimed in the camp. Without a diſtinction of the branches of the royal line, and with only a nobility of perſons and not of families, the regal authority could not root

* L'Eſprit des Loix, liv. xxx. chap. 18. L'Abbe de Mably, tom. i. p. 30.

† Le Gendre, p. 6. Henault Abbregé Chron. p. 42.

itſelf.

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* L'Eſprit des Loix, liv. xxx. chap. 20. † L'Abbe de Mably, ibid. p. 316.

to cheriſh vaſſalage, and both thoſe conſtitutions laid the groundwork of the feudal ſyſtem, which afterwards prevailed.

Æra of Charlemagne. A. D. 771.

THE reign of Charlemagne, ſon to Pepin, makes it evident that the Franks had a form of government, diſtinct in its principles from the feudal one. By it chiefly we may comprehend what ſome political writers mean, when they ſpeak of the Gothic conſtitution or model of policy. Here we find a council propoſing, a collective body deliberating and reſolving, and a prince performing the executive part of government. Before this celebrated period of their hiſtory, the exiſtence of this political ſyſtem among the Franks is only apparent from its rude elements. The conqueſt of Gaul, inſtead of eſtabliſhing, ſoon diſordered and unhinged its fundamental principles. A genius ſuperior to what Clovis or his deſcendants poſſeſſed, was wanted to adjuſt them to the exigencies of the larger commonwealth, to poiſe the more complex machine, and add force to its ſeveral ſprings, without infringing their general harmony. Such was Charlemagne, no leſs illuſtrious as a legiſlator and philoſopher than as a conqueror, who, in a ferocious age, and in a convulſed nation, knew how to reunite and combine the claſhing powers of the monarchy, and to engage them, by the moderation of his ſway, and the wiſdom and equity of the general laws and particular regulations he introduced, to a voluntary ſubordination and coherence.

THE union of the Franks under Pepin, and the exemplary and laudable policy of this prince, together with ſome reformation of the prevailing anarchy wrought by it, were the chief advantages which Charlemagne had to found upon and improve. Under that prince, the domeſtic quarrels and diſtractions of the nation had been

PART I. been reſtrained, and diverted by foreign wars and expeditions *. Pepin's victories over the Bavarians, Saxons and Lombards, revived the ſpirit and taſte of the Franks for new conqueſts. By the aſſiſtance he gave pope Stephen III. againſt the Lombards, they became intereſted in thoſe enterpriſes from motives of religion. At home he endeavoured to compoſe the national diſſenſions, by holding frequent general aſſemblies of the camp of May, where the biſhops † as well as the military lords and commanders attended. It may alſo be reckoned a circumſtance favourable to the eſtabliſhment of Charlemagne's government, that the ſeignioral juriſdictions and vaſſalages had yet but an inconſiderable footing. Such only was the proportion of their influence, that by ſoothing the ambition of the nobles, and becoming a kind of ſtay to the weakened frame of the monarchy, they might with proper attention be rendered ſubſervient to its quiet and tranquillity. With this ſlight ſcaffolding to the aggrandizement of his reign, Charlemagne not only proved the conqueror of the Lombards, Huns and Saxons, and ſet up the long demoliſhed empire of the weſt; but what is ſtill more remarkable ‡, raiſed ſome monument of his political genius, and of his legiſlative talents, in the government of various countries and nations he ſubdued. The religious enthuſiaſm of the age, without the encouragement of which he could not, perhaps, have been ſo great a conqueror, led him to propagate the faith by the ſword, and make ſuch cruel havoc of the idolatrous Saxons, as was altogether unſuitable to the heroic accompliſhments of his character. In other reſpects, his maxims of government were free from all tincture of deſpotiſm and tyranny.

* Henault Abbregé, p. 34. ibid. p. 42. † Paſquier, ibid. chap. 2.

‡ L'Eſprit des Loix, liv. xxxi. chap. 19.

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FEW of the lawgivers of antiquity atchieved a more arduous taſk in the original ſcheme and formation of their commonwealths, than Charlemagne performed in the re-conſtruction and amendment he made of that of the Franks. He alſo ſhewed that genius and taſte of legiſlation, for which the moſt renowned of them are diſtinguiſhed, by rendering the conſent of men to thoſe laws they are to obey, an eſſential part of his ſyſtem. Charles Martel had ſhewn him the way to eſtabliſh a military power, by the ravage of the riches and ſplendor of the hierarchy *, and the ſuppreſſion of the national aſſemblies of the Franks. Repin had exemplified how thoſe powers, being artfully oppoſed to each other, might be brought to yield to the will of the prince. Charlemagne entertained ſuperior views, and ſought, by ſhewing himſelf actuated by national glory and public intereſt, to awake the ſenſe of theſe motives, and by the influence of them to quell diſcord, and communicate the plan and principles of a more regular and durable adminiſtration. In ſurmounting the obſtacle firſt thrown in his way, by the domeſtic contention his brother Carloman excited, he appeared to root his intereſt on the national attachment to him; which being once engaged, he governed and ſupported all his motions and enterpriſes by it †. His firſt war with the Saxons, and the ſubſequent one in Italy with Deliderius or Dedier, king of the Lombards, were the reſult of the reſolutions of the general conventions of the Franks. The dignitaries of the eccleſiaſtical order, and the ſecular lords, ſaw with admiration, a prince exerting the efforts of his genius to adjuſt their differences, and reconcile their jarring intereſts. Senſible of the honour and

* Le Count de Boulainvilliers ſur les Parlemens, let. 2.

† Paſquier, ibid. Boulainvilliers, ibid. let. 3.

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View of the political government of Charlemagne.

In the review of the improved ſtate to which Charlemagne carried the political conſtitution of the Franks *, particular attention is due to his regulations of the common aſſemblies. The form, the order, the courſe of procedure, and the dignity eſtabliſhed in them, not only ſurpaſſed whatever is known of the Gothic models, but ſhewed a face of grandeur and policy, which was worthy of antient Greece and of Rome. Two of them were held in the year, one in autumn, and another in the ſpring. No more momentous or nobler regulation could be ordained. The firſt, though chiefly convocated to receive the gifts, or what may be called the tributes offered by the provinces to the prince, formed a larger ſenate or council of ſtate; which, by foreſight of the deliberations of the more numerous aſſembly of May enſuing, ſtudied to digeſt and reduce them to ſome diſtinct heads or general plan. At the ſame time a ſurvey was taken of the immediate exigencies of the ſtate, whether relative to foreign or domeſtic affairs. Truces were prolonged, directions for the ſecurity of the frontiers were given, and particular diſguſts or growing feuds among the lords prevented or ſuppreſſed. Compoſed of the oldeſt nobility, and ſome of the moſt experienced counſellors of the palace, this aſſembly became the eye of the government, and the directory of the great deſigns and purpoſes that were projected by the prince. Diſtinguiſhed

* Paſquier, ibid.

by

by an honorary precedency in deliberation, and ſome proviſional executive authority, without the power of definitive judgment or reſolution; prudent conduct, reſerve and ſecrecy accompanied its procedure, and characteriſed its conſtituent members. The next aſſembly of May, acquainted with the import and train of the public councils thus matured, proceeded with greater facility to determine and finiſh the arrangement of them. Here the whole collective body of the nobles, together with the primates of the clerical order, participated in the deliberations, and exerciſed the common right of judgment and ſuffrage. It * is even affirmed, on the authority of a capitulary of Lewis le De Bonnaire, that, beſides the multitude who ſtood by, to hear and ſignify their aſſent to the annunciation of the deciſions, there were twelve deputies of the Rachinbourgs or heads of the people from every county, who ſhared in the conſultations. To every thing political, civil and military which concerned the order, intereſt or honour of the monarchy, the deliberations might be extended. As the great legiſlature of the nation, the ſupreme tribunal and the rendezvous of the military chiefs, the aſſembly of May took cognizance of all affairs of peace and war, of public treaties and alliances, of the propriety of the renewal or the ſuſpenſion of them; of public revolts and private conſpiracies, and of the appointments, ſubſidies and deſtination of the army. The different orders of the clergy and laity held ſeparate conſultations, or joined their conferences, as the nature of the queſtions before them required. Having communicated to them the heads of laws, dictated by himſelf, or extracted from the provincial petitions tranſmitted to him; the prince, without interfering in their debates, waited the iſſue of

* L'Abbe de Mably Remarques et Preuves, p. 382.

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HAVING rendered the national aſſemblies the great center of union to the ſeveral orders of the ſtate, and the ſource of all general laws and deciſions; Charlemagne proceeded to ſupport the civil authority, and enforce the particular adminiſtration of juſtice in the provinces by a new proviſion. The flagrant abuſe and tyranny exerciſed in the juriſdiction of the dukes, counts and other magiſtrates, called for a remedy. The judicature of the dukes was laid aſide altogether, and for the ſuperintendence of their large diſtricts, three * or four delegates of the prelates and lords, with the title of *miſſi dominici*, or the kings envoys and commiſſaries, were appointed. The courts and aſſiſes held by them four times in the year, proved a check on the counts, and a ſpecial reſource againſt their oppreſſive judgments, or thoſe of their vicars and officers. By ſuch inſtitutions as theſe, and not by the arbitrary uſage of precepts, which were the deſperate correctives for a bad government employed by ſome of the Merovingian princes; Charle-

* L'Abbe de Mably, tom. i. p. 390.

magne

magne not only extricated the ſtate from diſorder, but effectuated a ſurpriſing reformation in the whole internal policy of the nation. In the adminiſtration of juſtice as well as in the œconomy of his palace, he gave a pattern of aſſiduity and exactneſs to the *apocriſiary* and the count, who judged under him; the one in the eccleſiaſtical, and the other in the ſecular affairs of the royal domains. Reſpect to order, to equity and common right, promoted by his example among the counſellors and great officers of ſtate, diffuſed itſelf through the various departments of government. The treatiſe wrote by Hinemar, archbiſhop of Rheims *, from the recital of Adelard, one of the counſellors of Lewis le De Bonnaire, who had ſeen the court of Charlemagne, may well be admitted to be no embelliſhed, but a true picture of the order of his government; when a vaſt number of his capitularies, not much ſhort of the entire body of them, remain; which ſerve to confirm the reality of it. Thoſe capitularies publiſhed in the name of the prince were the laws or deciſions of the common aſſemblies, called Les Malles †, plaids or parliaments, and though his particular ordinances or proviſional regulations are denominated capitularies, and blended with them, they had not the authority of the conſtitutional laws, unleſs they were ratified by the conſent of the ſeveral orders of the nation.

CROWNED emperor of the weſt by Leo III. and acknowledged in this title and quality by the eaſtern princes, and aſſiſted in the government of his extenſive dominions by the clergy ‡, to whom, not from ſuperſtition but from the perſuaſion of the neceſſity of

* Entitled, de l'Ordre du Sacre Palais, &c. and cited by Boulainvilliers, lett. 2.

† Henault, p. 83. Paſquier, ibid. ‡ L'Eſprit des Loix, liv. xxxi. chap. 12.

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ſuch a regulation, he aſſigned the tithes; equally ſupported and favoured by the nobles, whom his vaſt acquiſitions enabled him to gratify, with new grants of benefices for life; Charlemagne, in thoſe circumſtances of proſperity and glory, to which the favourable ſymptom of the reſtoration of letters was added, did not however conceive and entertain the deſign of forming his conqueſts into one great monarchy, to be tranſmitted as the undivided inheritance of a ſingle ſucceſſor. The ideas of grandeur in different ages are various. To eſtabliſh ſeveral principalities or kingdoms, and diſtribute ſcepters among their children, was in that age as conſiſtent with the ambition and the glory of the greateſt monarchs, as to accumulate all their acquiſitions into a larger empire, has ſince been reckoned. The rule, or what we now call the right of primogeniture, being a novelty; Charlemagne hazarded not its

806. precarious eſtabliſhment. In imitation of the eaſtern emperors, having aſſociated his three ſons into the ſovereignty with him, he made, with the conſent of a general parliament at Thionville *, ſuch a partition of the monarchy among them as he judged moſt equal and convenient. By this diviſion there was a kingdom of Aquitain, or the ſouthern provinces of France, a kingdom of Lombardy and Bavaria, and another of the eaſtern parts of France, and the contiguous diſtricts of Germany. Each partition formed a dominion of proper extent and ſufficient power, both to maintain its ſeparate independency, and to reſiſt and overcome the aſſault of other barbarous nations. By the proviſions made for the conſtitution of the three monarchies, it plainly appears that Charlemagne intended an entire † diſjunction of them. It was ſurely an inſtance of profound policy, of which few examples are found, if he was

* Boulainvilliers, let. 3. † L'Abbe de Mably, p. 195.

guided to this meaſure from the juſt and wiſe conſideration, that kingdoms in their ſize and compaſs ought to bear a proportion to the growth of civility, and the maturity of knowledge and maners of a people. Thoſe of the Franks were far from quadrating with the erection and ſupport of a vaſt unwieldy empire. Charlemagne, by the ſtrength of his genius, had ſtretched that of the nation above that of its natural level. A revolution was to be feared, which this laſt effort of his policy ſeemed calculated to abate. By the death of two of his ſons, Charles and Pepin, the deſtined partition was fruſtrated; and, contrary to the original ſcheme of his father, Lewis, king of Aquitain, was choſe to ſucceed him in the whole of his extenſive dominions and conqueſts.

How much the ability to maintain ſuch an empire, as Charlemagne had acquired *, tranſcended the genius of his age and nation, appeared by the conduct and fate of his race. To trace the declenſion of the French monarchy, according to the ordinary ſtyle of hiſtorians, in the perſonal defects and weakneſſes of the Carlovingian princes, may be amuſing to thoſe who can patiently endure the repetition of the ſame dull and trite obſervations; and think that hiſtory has acquitted herſelf of her grand taſk, when ſhe runs the change on the characters of kings, and leaves the greateſt political alterations and phenomena in ſtates and kingdoms, to be ſolved from the ſummary given of their virtues or vices. That Lewis le De Bonnaire was weak and ſuperſtitious, the dupe often of his paſſions and of his virtues, is certain; but no ordinary capacity and virtue were ſufficient to rear up a fixed model of

814.

* Paſquier, liv. v. chap. 3.

government

PART I. government on the foundations ſuddenly laid by Charlemagne *. His plan of diſmembering the empire was copied by Lewis; who thought to improve on it by preſcribing a kind of ſubordination of his two younger ſons to Lotharius the elder, whom he aſſumed into a partnerſhip with himſelf in the imperial dignity. As this ſubordination, though ſome reſtraint on the independency of the brother kings, proceeded on the ſimpleſt of all ideas, which are thoſe taken from the natural order of a family, and was evidently calculated to preſerve the union and general intereſt of the royal race, it ſeemed to be no impracticable or improper device. But even ſuch a regulation was too nice and delicate for that period, and Lewis, inſtead of being able to ſupport it, found himſelf diſtreſſed by the intrigues of his ſecond wife Judith, in favour of his youngeſt ſon, and expoſed to the combination of Lotharius, Pepin and Lewis, whom he had crowned, againſt his authority. Thoſe diſtractions of the royal family were attended with the diſgrace of the emperor, with treaties of peace and new ſhares of the empire, ratified and ſoon diſannulled, and with violations of all ties of honour, duty and allegiance. The eſtabliſhed order of the ſtate ſunk under the preſſure of thoſe contentions, and former impreſſions of it were ſoon obliterated among the clergy and the nobles, who beheld perfidy, terror and force, chiefly employed to adjuſt the pretenſions of the rival princes, and decide the fate of the monarchy. Every public movement ſhewed the approaching diſſolution of the principles of Charlemagne's government, till, after Lewis le De Bonnaire's death, the bloody battle of Fontenay, in which 100,000 men are ſaid to have fallen †, was fought

* Boulainvilliers, let. 3. L'Eſprit des Loix, liv. xxxi. chap. 17.

† Henault, p. 60. Boulainvil. ibid.

between

between Lotharius with the title of emperor on the one ſide, and Lewis of Bavaria, called le Germanique, and Charles the Bald on the other. The fatal ſymptom, and not the cauſe of the ruin of the monarchy, it produced only a new cartel of partition, without diminiſhing the feuds of the ſtate. While the phantom of the imperial dignity, as yet unaffixed to the poſſeſſion of any of the particular branches of the divided monarchy, was purſued by ſeveral competitors; even this veſtige of the aggrandizement of the nation, which about this time began to be called by the name of French, became part of its bane, and contributed to its diſorder and depreſſion. For the ſake of obtaining this vain title, Charles the Bald *, whoſe dominions were limited to the kingdom of France, made a conceſſion to the pope of privileges which were made uſe of by the biſhops of Rome, as a pretext for their conferring or giving the inveſtiture of the imperial diadem. It ſlipt to the natural line of Carloman, ſon of Lewis le Germanique, and was afterwards transferred to Conrad, duke of Franconia, who from a foreign houſe was choſen emperor by the Germans. Diſputable or elective crowns, and controverted titles or arbitrary rules of ſucceſſion, thus ſoon choaked the empire of Charlemagne almoſt in its birth. Amidſt the perturbations attending its downfall, and the barbarity of the age, hardly was there found a reverſion of political rules or principles ſufficient to eſtabliſh one ſeparate kingdom. That of France, though it continued to be held by the children of Charles the Bald, and the line of Charlemagne, was agitated with various broils, and expoſed to the continual ravages of the Normans †. Notwithſtanding Lewis le Begué, and one or two more of French kings, ſtill maintained

* Henault, p. 65.

† Ibid. p. 71.

PART I. their claim to be emperors, and Charles le Gros recovered the greateſt part of Charlemagne's dominions; the royalty declined, and the government has haſtened on to a total change, by the ſuperior energy of the feudal inſtitutions.

Subverſion of Charlemagne's empire and policy, and the growth of the feudal ſyſtem.

THOUGH Charlemagne's political government reſtrained the progreſs of the feudal ſyſtem, its main principles blended with the unfiniſhed conſtitution of the ſtate and monarchy, were become too vigorous to be controuled. The territorial benefices of the crown being put on the footing of military tenures, and granted for life; and the number of ſuch fiefs being increaſed with the large conqueſts made, and the exerciſe of the judicial and military authority in the ſeigniories, interfering with the regular juriſdiction of the ſtate; the whole ſyſtem of government ſhrunk like a fabric, which hath a biaſs in its frame. Amidſt the confuſions which oppreſſed the ſtate, the eſtabliſhment of fiefs, ſeignioral rights, and the obligations of vaſſalage, flouriſhed as in their proper ſoil. A ſtate of independance being ſpread among the lords, the idea of nobility in families which the territorial grants and honorary offices of the crown while precarious, had not communicated, now aroſe, and the only political principle which remained unchanged in the nation, was the uſage of giving and receiving the pledges of fealty and homage. By means of this only enduring tie, the kings endeavoured to draw the nobility to obedience; and the lords, by it, with more efficacy, engaged vaſſals, and drew people to dependence on themſelves *. Every gift of the ſmalleſt pittance of land was reckoned to conſtitute an obligation to military ſervice. To render their grants and benefices the more obligatory on their vaſſals, the

* L'Eſprit de Loix, liv. xxxi. chap. 24. Ibid. chap. 26.

kings began to make ſome of them hereditary, and found a neceſſity of allowing others of them to deſcend to the children of their poſſeſſors, who were become too potent to be forced to reſign them. After Lewis le De Bonnaire had ſet the example of ſome ſuch alterations, Charles the Bald could not help yielding ſtill further to the natural courſe of events. Already obliged, by the diſcontented and refractory behaviour of the vaſſals of his domain, after the battle of Fontenay, to diſpenſe with their ſervice in the field, except in the caſe of foreign invaſions; he thought no doubt to win their obedience, which could not be commanded, by paſſing a general law for the inheritance of the fiefs *. It behoved him to proceed to place things ſimilar on the ſame foundation. The counties in which various uſurpations had been made, were alſo converted into patrimonial governments. By thoſe reſignations, which from the ſituation of things became almoſt inevitable, the veſtiges of the antient conſtitution of the ſtate and monarchy were ſoon overthrown. Lands and eſtates allodial were changed into fiefs, or feudal tenures, and thoſe again were turned into allodia; when the proprietors affected to have no dependence but on God and their ſword †. In the former caſe the allodia were ſubjected to the king or ſome feudal lord, to whom fealty was ſworn. But all thoſe various commutations had one and the ſame tendency, and co-operated to the extinction of every ſpecies of regular authority and ſubordination, and to the production of anarchy, and of the feudal ſyſtem its natural offering. The royal domains and benefices of the crown, parcelled out among the lords, with the privilege of inheritance, became the nurſery of vaſſals, attached not to the king, but to their immediate ſuperiors. Every ſinew

* Boulainvilliers, let. 4.

† L'Eſprit des Loix, ibid.

PART I.

of the royal power was cramped and withered, as the ſub-vaſſals were reared under the protection of their liege lords*. In the reign
920. of Charles the ſimple, the whole royal domain is reckoned to have been ingroſſed into ſeven principal fiefs, to which all the leſſer ones were ſubjected by feudal dependence. As near two hundred years before, the crown had been ſwept off from the Merovingians, by the exorbitant power of the mayor's office; ſo it was evident, that now it behoved either to be loſt in the anarchy, or undergoing another revolution, be incorporated into the greateſt fief. The Carlovingian family ſcarce kept a feeble hold of it, until it appeared which of the lords was the moſt potent†. Such Hugh Capet, who was duke of the Iſle of France, and count of Paris and Orleans, proved himſelf to be. Upon the death of Lewis V. called Faineant, he with little difficulty aſſumed the royalty; and being proclaimed king in an aſſembly of his friends and vaſſals, maintained himſelf on the throne; to the excluſion of Charles duke of Lorain, the ſole deſcendant of Charlemagne's family, and uncle to the deceaſed prince.

End of the race of Charlemagne.

* La France dans ſa ſplendeur par Louvet, duodec. edit. tom. i. p. 86. Henault, p. 94.

† Boulainvilliers, let. 3. Henault, p. 90.

SECT. II.

Progreſs of the feudal policy under HUGH CAPET—*Expoſition of its principles*—*Alteration in it by charters of infranchiſement*—*Declenſion of its ſyſtem.*

A GOVERNMENT founded on the moſt ſimple principles, is the only one adapted to uncivilized nations. The original policy of the Franks, which on principles entirely rude and democratical, involved a ſpecies of kingly government, and aimed at the eſtabliſhment of a ſubordination of offices, without a diſtinction of perſons and families, was ſoon thrown into confuſion. Hardly did the ſtrong compreſſure formed by the wiſe laws of Charlemagne on the incoherent parts of this ſyſtem preſerve it for a time from burſting aſunder. A contrariety and repugnance of the national manners and cuſtoms to thoſe new laws and regulations, ſtill ſubſiſting, and events in progreſs of time ariſing, which looſed all the antient bands of government; the monarchy naturally revolved into the feudal ſtate; a kind of government, if in its original it may be ſo called, which aſſumed for its ſupport no other ties or principles, but thoſe already known of fealty and homage, which conſidered only the advantageous adminiſtration of a fief, and not the policy of a nation, which made men the territorial vaſſals and ſoldiers of their lords, who would not be governed as ſubjects, and which ſacrificed the natural rights of almoſt half the people of the nation, who were the induſtrious part of it, for the ſake of maintaining and propagating the tyranny and endleſs broils of the other. In compariſon with the more cultivated ſtate of government in modern times, or with the more

A. D. 987.

The progreſs of the feudal government under *Hugh Capet* and his ſucceſſors.

PART I. equal and refined policy of the antient world, this judgment may be formed of the feudal conſtitution. But in reſpect of the age which gave it birth, and the barbariſm and ignorance with which it was coeval; it may be allowed to be that ſyſtem, which was fitteſt to take root, and become ſtable and permanent among the Franks, and other Gothic nations; prone to ſucceſſive revolutions and anarchy, and which, after almoſt five hundred years of their domination in Europe, had rather declined than improved in their political condition.

THE advancement of the feudal government to a ſettled and conſiſtent form, was not effectuated for ſeveral reigns ſubſequent to that of Hugh Capet. Rude and truly Gothic as its cuſtoms muſt be accounted, their entire eſtabliſhment was the gradual work of time, and we muſt ſuppoſe many variations and changes had prevailed, in a courſe of more than two centuries, before they could be compiled into a ſyſtem, as was done in St. Lewis's reign. However, the revolution created in the French monarchy, by the prevalence of this government, was ſoon completed; and all the groſs and violent impoſitions attending feudal ſovereignty and vaſſalage, were in a ſhort time extended through the dutchies, counties and baronies of the kingdom, divided into greater and leſſer fiefs. We might reckon it ſurpriſing, if any event can be deemed ſo, that ariſes in an age of barbarity, to obſerve, that not only the diſtinction among the freemen and ſerfs was almoſt aboliſhed, but that even the Salic * and Ripuarian laws to which the nation had been accuſtomed, and the capitularies which had been adopted as its civil and political regulations for a courſe of time, were ſoon

* L'Eſprit des Loix, liv. xxviii. chap. 9.

totally

totally ſubverted; and ſcarce any thing more, beſides the rude ſpirit of the former, could long ſurvive the riſe of the feudal ſyſtem. Its genius, indeed, was ſuch as to bring every thing to its level, and to be the original of tyrannical claims and exactions, altogether new, and to eradicate all principles or notions of civil right, inconſiſtent with its foundation. It fixed the bulk of the common people, or the labouring men, without making ſlaves of them, in a ſtate of bondage, little different from it. The Roturriers could make no acquiſition of property, which they could diſpoſe of as their own, or transfer to any but their children, who were born and reſided on the domain or fief to which they belonged. The inhabitants of the towns, whether tradeſmen or merchants, were ſubjected to arbitrary taxes and burdens; equally deſtructive of all right or property in what they poſſeſſed. Every occupation or trade, conſidered as an appendage of the fief where it was exerciſed, contributed to the ſervice, or was turned to the profit of the lord. Rights the moſt natural and common among all civil ſocieties of mankind, were reſtrained or granted only as indulgences; which were paid for in money or labour. The ſupply of the feudal ſuperior and his military train of vaſſals, with all things requiſite for their defence, or for the annoyance of their neighbours, was the main and only object required in this unnatural ſyſtem; which, by the multiplication of fiefs, and the gradual conſtitution of a great number of inferior baronies, with various powers of juriſdiction, extended tyranny and lawleſs ſway over the common people, to a pitch beyond any other ſpecies of government. At the ſame time its ſudden eſtabliſhment was a proof, that far the greateſt

Expoſition of the feudal policy, and its peculiar maxims.

* Ibid. chap. 45.

part

PART I. part of that claſs of people were become bondmen; previous to the acceſſion of the third race of the French kings.

BUT with reſpect to the fundamental tie of ſubordination in the feudal government, that of giving and receiving fealty and homage, on which were conſtituted the rights and duties of the lord who beſtowed the fief, and of the vaſſal who accepted it; there were already certain precedents ſet, and uſages followed from the time of Charlemagne, which would ſerve to direct, and in ſome meaſure render conſiſtent the application of the general political principles. Beſides other regulations in the capitularies about the military ſervice exacted of thoſe who held fiefs of the crown, which reduced it to a kind of ſettled form or order; the treaty or arrangement made by Charles the Bald with his vaſſals, had preſented a model of the reciprocal claims and obligations of the parties connected together by the oath of fidelity, and by homage *. We ſee from an ordinance of Charles le Gros, of which the count de Boulainvilliers gives an extract, that, antecedent to any military expedition, a ban or general publication was made of the time and place of rendezvous appointed for the vaſſals, who were only obliged to march forth within a certain number of days poſterior to it, according to the diſtance of the enterpriſe; that from a valuation made of the fief, from the labour of the plows of oxen, its ſervice was regulated, and the pay allowed by the lord for the men at arms, aſcertained; and that the vaſſals who did not appear in obedience to the ſummons, unleſs they could aſſign a valid reaſon for their abſence, were condemned to the loſs of their fiefs. From the nature of military ſervice, a variety of

* Sect. 4.

other

other particular ſtipulations became neceſſary, which put the feudal tenures of land on the footing of engagements or compacts, implying mutual duties to be performed on the part of the lords and the vaſſals. As the greateſt lords in the nation, and even the firſt Capetian kings themſelves, held fiefs, and depended on other ſeigniories, and were at the ſame time feudal ſuperiors and vaſſals; the obligations of fealty and homage, to which they diſdained not to bind themſelves, could not be arbitrary appointments, but had ſuch terms and conditions annexed to them as they with propriety and honour could fulfil.

By means of this combination of the rights of the feudal proprietor of the domains, and of the duties of the vaſſal in the ſame perſons; ideas of a common intereſt with reſpect to the one and the other were formed, and general rules or cuſtoms, ſuitable to both thoſe different conditions, were introduced *. It was ſuppoſed and allowed that the *liege* lord might forfeit his right to the ſervice of his vaſſal, by proving injurious or oppreſſive to him, by refuſing him protection againſt his enemies, or denying him the judgment of his court; as well as the vaſſal become chargeable with felony, and loſe his fief, by refuſing to do the cuſtomary homage to his lord, by deſerting or abſconding from his ſervice, either in his wars or in the aſſizes of his courts, and by neglecting to defend from injury his perſon or property. But though ſome ſuch general principles might be underſtood, and ſo far admitted as to prove a baſis to the œconomy of the fiefs, and the eſtabliſhment of the feudal policy; we may well imagine what diſputes and conteſts would ariſe, in a variety of particular caſes relative to

* Boulainvilliers, ibid.

PART I. the ſummary of all the complex claims and duties, civil and military, which were to be thus defined and reciprocally diſcharged, betwixt thoſe who owned no other political tie or principle of ſubordination, but that of fealty and homage. However, the cuſtoms and uſages which were ſubmitted to in that ignorant age, ſoon came to be reckoned the laws of the fiefs; and in the reign
1108. of Lewis VI. called le Gros, the fifth of the Capetians, the feudal government may be ſaid to have attained a regular eſtabliſhment.

By the reſolution of all the principles of government into thoſe of fealty and homage, it is plain that the ideas of being ſubjects to a king, or members of a ſtate or public community, would totally fail, and be obliterated among the territorial vaſſals of every rank and order. The Capetian princes were, indeed, chiefly diſtinguiſhable in the feudal ſyſtem, by being conſidered and owned as chief or paramount lords of the fiefs of the crown; and even in this view, their authority by no means amounted to what it may be ſuppoſed to have done, but was ſtill diminiſhed and counteracted by the prevailing principles of the times. Whether * it may be imputed to ſome particular notions of honour, or to the attention of the great vaſſals to limit their military ſervice, it is certain, that the kings could not require their attendance in the field in any quarrel or diſpute that did not concern the common intereſt of the fiefs which held of the crown. To oppoſe the invaſion of a foreign power, they could be ſummoned and arrayed, or to chaſtize and puniſh the felony of ſome of the vaſſals themſelves, the concurrence of the reſt could be commanded; but

* L'Abbe de Mably, tom. ii. p. 36.

in other caſes, their obedience was altogether voluntary, and could not be inſiſted upon. The vaſſals of the crown were not obliged to fight for the dukes of France and the counts of Paris and Orleans; though in this quality the Capetian princes had many intereſting conteſts. It was even deemed diſhonourable for thoſe lords to challenge or declare war againſt any but their peers or equals, except in the caſe of puniſhing the crimes of their vaſſals. In this manner the feuds of thoſe times, which we may well ſuppoſe to have been altogether lawleſs, aſſumed certain reſtrictions and rules, which even the ſtate of war itſelf would preſcribe, and cuſtom maintain. As their broils would be often terminated by treaties, the mediation of the king between the contending vaſſals, and the interpoſition of ſome of theſe again in the reconcilement of the king and his adverſaries, would naturally produce a general ſubmiſſion of the vaſſals of the crown to the judgment of a feudal court; of which the king would be held the true and legitimate ſuperior. To be tried by their peers, and to be under the obligation only to combat with them, were the claims of the vaſſals; founded, it would ſeem, on a double conſideration, both of policy and honour.

In the form and courſe of judicial trials, the native barbarity and groſs ſuperſtition of the nation had already admitted, as a Salic law, in certain caſes, the proof by ordeal, or boiling water and hot irons *. It was a reformation only ſuitable to the ignorant notions and boaſtful proweſs of the feudal times, to ſubſtitute in the room of thoſe uſages that of the judicial duel or combat, which had obtained, not among the Franks, but among the Burgundians.

* Paſquier, liv. iv. chap. 1. L'Eſprit des Loix, liv. xxviii. chap. 16. ibid. 19.

PART I. When ſentence was about to be pronounced, the party againſt whom it ſtruck could challenge to ſingle combat his adverſary, and defy in the ſame manner every one of his judges. The attendance or ſervice of the vaſſal in theſe aſſizes, which, in this mode of them, became a fenced liſt of battle, being no leſs neceſſary than in the field; his abſence from them was made highly penal. It was, indeed, for deciding the material controverſies about the rights of the feudal lord, and the privileges of the vaſſal, that thoſe courts of the peers of the fiefs were held. No ſentence againſt the vaſſal for confiſcation or fine could be paſſed, without being authorized by them. An arbitrary procedure on the part of the lord, and the denial of the juſtice of his court gave the vaſſal the right of war. This maxim, which being legitimated, and allowed to take place, with reſpect to the kings themſelves, hath a ſound ſo ſtrange to us in modern times, appears, on a little reflexion, to have been no more than a neceſſary effect of the peculiar œconomy of the fiefs. When the vaſſal, who was wronged, or ſuppoſed himſelf to be ſo, could demand the combat at the bar of judgment, is it ſurpriſing that, when refuſed a trial in court, he ſhould claim and be allowed the liberty of denouncing war? But from the caſe as it is ſtated in the ordinance * itſelf, it is evident, that the ſituation of the rear vaſſals, bound by fealty and homage to none but their immediate lords, and who held their fiefs independent of all other ſuperiors, was ſufficient to introduce and ſupport this right of war. The engagement on them from duty and honour, to follow their lord in his wars, was the ſame with that of the king's vaſſals, and their violation of it expoſed them to the like puniſhment, by the forfeiture of their fiefs. It was this abſolute detachment of the ſub-

* Boulainvilliers, let. 5. Henault, p. 165.

vaſſals

vaſſals from the king or the ſupereminent lord, which deſtroyed every notion or principle of loyalty, and gave their immediate ſuperiors a right to arm them againſt all perſons who were their adverſaries, and rendered the ſyſtem of the fiefs much more a model of incoherence and anarchy, than of ſubordination and regular government. When St. Lewis conveened the barons of the kingdom, in order that they might renew their oath of fidelity to him, and plight it to his children, in caſe he died in the cruſade for which he was preparing; Joinville *, an old French writer, ſays, that he himſelf was called, and repaired to Paris among the reſt. "But I, adds he, who was no ſubject of his, would give no oath; and therefore it was not my purpoſe to ſtay." This was the language and principle of every rear vaſſal, however well affected he might otherwiſe be to the king. In other governments the ſovereign power has been ſhared among ſeveral members of the ſtate; but under the feudal eſtabliſhment, every barony was inveſted with it †. Supreme juriſdiction, the rights of war, the protection of the churches, and the privilege of the mint, or coinage of money, were allowed to be inherent rights in the fiefs of that order. As all things went by one undiſtinguiſhing rule, even the ſmaller feudal tenures arrogated moſt of thoſe rights. But in the exerciſe of ſome of them, the power of the barons prevailed to circumſcribe thoſe petty regalities. Their courts, though final in their ſentences, were not allowed to judge in all cauſes; whence aroſe the territorial diſtinction of fiefs d' Haubert, or high juriſdiction, and de bas juſtice, or inferior judicial power; neither were they permitted to uſe other ſpecie, than that

* Henault, ibid. L'Abbe de Mably, tom ii. p. 266. † Boulainvilliers, ibid.

which

PART I. which was coined in the baronies. Thoſe feudal aſſizes of the vaſſals muſt be underſtood to be different from the courts, which were held by the king or the lords for the œconomy of their particular domains, the appointment and regulation of the taxes of their bondmen or the roturiers, and other ſuch purpoſes. In the latter the territorial lord ſat alone, and gave ſentence himſelf or by the miniſtry of his bailiff or ſeneſchal. In the former he only preſided, and the judgment depended on the plurality of the votes of the aſſembled vaſſals. The king's court, which was the moſt pompous, and called that of the peers of France, met generally twice in the year. A more particular account of it and the peerage will be given in a paſſage of the ſubſequent hiſtory.

THE French nation inveloped in the feudal government, not only ceaſed from all foreign conqueſts, but loſt the power of domeſtic defence. Its kings were engaged in too many broils with their vaſſals to be able to turn their arms abroad, or diſturb any of their neighbours. Though the right of primogeniture was ſo far eſtabliſhed both in the fiefs and in the ſucceſſion to the crown, that the kings only uſed the precaution of performing the ceremony of the coronation of their ſons *, and pre-engaged the fealty of the vaſſals to them as heirs of the royalty, a practice which ſtopt at Lewis VIII; yet ſuch were their embarraſſed circumſtances, that they could hardly be ſenſible of this only advantage derived to them from the feudal principles of policy. Even the oppoſition they met with from the petty lords of Mont le heri, Corbeil, Mante and others, employed Philip I. and Lewis le Gros in frequent intervals of war; in which, as it is obſerved †, that the ſingle

* Henault, p. 128. † Ibid. p. 118. Boulainvilliers, ibid.

caſtle

caſtle of Puiſet took three years to reduce it, we may judge how much unſkilfulneſs in the military art had balanced the ſtrength of the contending parties. But the uſurpation of the dukedom of Normandy by Henry I. of England brought an enemy to the borders of the Iſle of France, whoſe power and ambition were extremely formidable and dangerous. Lewis le Gros was incapable to oppoſe him, and yet found himſelf obliged to commence hoſtilities againſt Henry. On the part of the French king, the war proved not only unſucceſsful as it was unequal, but by diſcovering the unſtable faith of the great vaſſals of the crown, pointed out to his adverſary the eaſieſt and moſt hopeful courſe of ruining the feeble monarchy, by inducing them to renounce their allegiance. But finding themſelves placed between two competitors for the aſcendancy over them, the vaſſals took different ſides, and often changed from one to another, according to their views of intereſt. Yet ſuch diviſion of the members of the feudal body in France was ſufficiently favourable to the purpoſes of the Engliſh monarchs; and it appeared by the vaſt acquiſitions of French territory made under Henry II. how much the ſcale of fortune preponderated for them. By the ſucceſſion of Richard Cœur de Lion to the Engliſh throne, thoſe diſadvantages were ſtill further enlarged; and notwithſtanding the prudent vigilance and ſtrenuous reſiſtance of Philip the Auguſt, ſome ſignal revolutions ſeemed to be threatened, by the enterpriſes of a prince ſo renowned for valour; and who, to ſuperior ſtrength, could join the artifice of ſupporting the cauſe of the great vaſſals, and ſhewing himſelf, as a French writer calls him, the Tribune of the fiefs in France. But the genius and circumſtances of thoſe ages were not ſuited to produce events, which require a ſteady adherence to one aim, and the purſuit

PART I. ſuit of the ſame train of meaſures. The cabinet councils of the kings, and the political deliberations of ſtates, reſembled the irregular compoſitions of the governments; and from many obvious cauſes, bore the ſame character of inconſiſtence and contrariety. Their wars and their treaties were without a plan, the effects of ſudden quarrels and perſonal diſguſts between princes, which were as abruptly adjuſted; or cauſed by the innate ardor of diſintereſted chivalry, inſtigated only by the motives of religious zeal and ſuperſtition. Whatever deſigns and enterprizes were undertaken, from particular conſiderations of national intereſt and policy, the whole of thoſe ſchemes were ſtill liable to an inſuperable controul from the banners of the church, and the terrors of the ſpiritual rod of Rome. The pilgrimages, the humiliations and penances, enjoined by its apoſtolic vicar, had authority to ſuſpend or reſtrain the career of ambitious and deſigning princes; and the cruſades preached up, became an incentive to a ſpecies of military action, adapted to the ſpirit of thoſe times, and ſerved, by one direction, to compoſe or quell the ferocity and combuſtions of nations, which were held together by weak and inſufficient connexions of policy, and guided by few fixed purpoſes in their wars againſt one another.

By means of ſome phænomenon of this kind, the fortune of the French and the Engliſh monarchs was reverſed. The captivity of Richard on his return from an expedition to Palæſtine, and the ſignal diſſenſions of his ſucceſſor John, called Lackland, both with his barons and the pope, gave Philip the Auguſt an opportunity of triumphing. His ſon Lewis, after having defeated king John, was crowned in London. But this ſurpriſing revolution was like other adventures of the age, only momentary and tranſient; though

with

with reſpect to the Engliſh nation, the effects it produced were very intereſting and remarkable. The barons of that kingdom who deſerted Lewis, got their immunities confirmed by two charters, which were preſerved and venerated as thè Palladia of their national liberty. The French, on the contrary, who had the glory of appearing as arbiters of the conteſt of the Engliſh with their king, and the advantage of ſharing the ſpoils of his fiefs and domains on the continent, made ſome reſignation to their ſovereign of their feudal rights *. By the arbitrary and violent ſentence of confiſcation and death, pronounced in the court of peers againſt John, as a vaſſal of the crown, and charged with the murder of his nephew the duke of Bretagne; a precedent was eſtabliſhed for the invaſion of the fiefs, and the arraignment of the vaſſals, which the kings could afterwards inſiſt upon, and turn to their own emolument. But in this caſe of the judgment of the Engliſh king, prejudice prompted the French peers to overlook the reference it had to their common intereſt and ſafety.

1180. Alterations in the feudal ſyſtem by charters of infranchiſement granted to the inhabitants of towns.

THE reign of Philip the *Auguſt*, in which Normandy, Anjou, Maine, Touraine, and the greateſt part of Poictou, were wreſted from the Engliſh kings, proved an æra favourable to the advancement of the power and authority of the Capetian princes, above the level of the feudal ſyſtem. Already in the reign of Lewis le Gros, its defects and inconſiſtencies had undergone ſome animadverſions. The church, which found her immunities and juriſdictions cramped by that of the feudal courts, and the former authority of her prelates, both in civil and eccleſiaſtical matters, meaſured by the dignity and extent of their temporalities, had

* Boulainvilliers, let. 5. Henault, p. 142.

PART I. taken the alarm; and by raiſing her cry to the ſovereign pontiff, had, with his powerful aſſiſtance, broke through the fetters of the fiefs, and diſpenſed with their judicial cuſtoms *. The oppreſſions and tyranny ſhe complained of, and which were in reality far more felt among the body of the laity, had occaſioned ſacred aſſociations to be formed, and oaths to be ſworn for keeping the truces of God (ſo they called the feaſt days and their eves) free from broils and ſlaughter. But in the reign of Lewis le Gros, a more effectual remedy had been applied to reſtrain the inceſſant feuds and outrages, that deſolated the various provinces of the kingdom. In his domains the example was ſet of infranchiſing the inhabitants of the towns, and granting them the privilege of incorporation. Though the purchaſe of liberty made by them was originally very ſimple, and included only the moſt natural rights; yet, from the nature of the grants, and the gradual increaſe of the immunities, it became an event of ſignal importance. Whether in Lewis the ſcheme aroſe from policy, or the view of gain; the feudal lords, without doubt, who adopted it, made the ſale of charters a profitable branch to them. The exemptions, proviſions, and the various modifications of liberty and privilege contained in the charters, ſhewed not only what neceſſary and juſt abatement, for the good of the ſociety, ought to be made of the rigour of the feudal uſages, but furniſhed the outlines of a more equal and rational policy. With a guard of militia for their defence, with magiſtrates and officers called mayors and echevins, either choſen by the community or named by the lords of the territory; the burrows ſoon began to change their appearance into that of petty republics, which could aſſert the freedom granted to them, and

* Boulainvilliers, ibid.

even overawe the rigid diſpenſers of it. The right of war, accounted one and the ſame thing with that of repriſals, became a part of the immunities of the burgeſſes. The perfidy of the lords, and the attempts of many of them to reduce the townſmen to former thraldom, naturally engaged the latter to ſeek the protection of the kings. When conteſts of this kind aroſe, the princes were often called upon to be mediators of the diſſenſions, or guarantees of the new contracts which were made. By ſuch interpoſition, the general claims of the royalty in reſpect of juriſdiction, would gain ſome colour and foundation. Placed as barriers againſt the inceſſant ravages of the inferior chieftains, and ſome reſtraints on the uſurpation of the great lords; the free towns were ſoon regarded by the kings as convenient auxiliaries to the royal authority*. By their emancipation we may reckon, that Philip the Auguſt was enabled to raiſe and maintain a body of troops; a power which none of the Capetians before him appear to have exerciſed. By his conqueſt of Normandy, and other advantages, he became ſo far ſuperior to the greateſt of the vaſſals in ſtrength, that the combination of their forces could only prove formidable to the royalty.

Declenſion of the feudal ſyſtem from internal cauſes.

BUT the feudal conſtitution was too firmly eſtabliſhed to have been affected by thoſe acquiſitions of power and intereſt made by the kings; if the various irregularities and original ſources of corruption and degeneracy, which adhered to it, had not contributed to its declenſion, and facilitated the attempts which were uſed by ſucceſſive princes to effectuate its fall. Beſides the vaſt diverſities of the local cuſtoms of the different fiefs in judicial procedure, in

* Henault, p. 145.

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the penalties and fines inflicted by the feudal judges, which rendered them the more fluctuating and unſtable; it appears that the courts of the inferior or rear vaſſals, would, from their conſtitution and circumſtances, be ſoon ſubverted. As thoſe ſmaller fiefs ſometimes wanted the requiſite number of vaſſals to conſtitute a court, which * de Fontaines reckons to have been four, they could not proceed to give judgment without borrowing ſome peers from the court of the ſuperior lord. From caprice or tyranny in the barons, this conceſſion was often withheld. Equally unable to maintain their power of judgment, or to make war, the petty vaſſals choſe, or were forced to ſue, for redreſs at the courts of lords, that were paramount to their own †. The cuſtom of appealing, inſtead of a perilous denunciation of war, in the caſe of denial of juſtice or default of right, thus took its riſe. The independancy affected by ſome barons made them take the ſame courſe. Others, to avoid having the judgments of their courts falſified and remitted to the iſſue of a duel, called ſome of the king's feudal judges to their aid, as being leſs liable to be challenged. The whole form and tenor of the ſeignioral juriſdictions, which proceeded on no fixed plan or certain principles, became more diſturbed and involved in inconſiſtencies. Still, however, notwithſtanding appeals were encouraged, and letters of exemption and ſafeguard were granted by the kings, in oppoſition to the juriſdictions of the lords, it required the reign of St. Lewis to produce a ſignal diminution of their influence and authority.

* Boulainvilliers, let. 5.

† L'Eſprit des Loix, liv. xxviii. chap. 28.

SECT. III.

Reign of St. Lewis—Of Philip the Hardy *and Philip-le-bel—Of Lewis* X. *called* Hutin—*Of Philip* VI. *ſurnamed de* Valois—*Argument about the* Salic *law—Battle of Creſſy—Reign of John—Battle of Poictiers—Convulſion of the ſtate—Sedition and outrage of the Pariſians—Treaty of Bretigni.*

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1226. Reign of St. Lewis.

IT was not by oppoſing his royal authority againſt the laws of the fiefs that St. Lewis rendered his reign an æra remarkable for undermining them. In the weak ſtate of the royalty, ſuch an attempt would have been abortive and pernicious to the monarchy. He proceeded in a more judicious courſe, that ſhewed, not his abilities only to take advantage of the feuds of the lords, and the diſorders of an incoherent ſyſtem; but his capacity to become a legiſlator to his country, if the French nation at that period could have admitted a change in the principles of its policy and government. But what was impoſſible to be done for the nation, he promoted in his own domains *. In them he had authority to proſcribe the barbarous inſtitution of the judicial duel or combat. By this he looſed one of the chief props of the feudal juriſdiction, without which it could not eaſily be maintained. In oppoſition both to the groſs prejudices of religion, with which this ſhocking deciſion of right was connected, and to the political notion that had been formed with reſpect to the honour of a court which had paſſed ſentence; St. Lewis taught his ignorant age and country how cauſes might be determined without the

* Henault, p. 163.

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combat of the parties, and how a judgment could be appealed from, without ſuch an injurious impeachment of the honour of the judges as was thought equivalent to a challenge, and to require a vindication by proweſs and the trial of arms. He appointed what the arbitrary ſpirit of the feudal judges deemed inconſiſtent with their dignity; an amendment of the ſentences complained againſt, to take place. From the courts of his prevots and of his bailiffs, appeals were carried to the tribunal where he himſelf preſided. The great vaſſals and barons beheld with ſurpriſe this new juriſprudence introduced and gain ground. Attached to their antient cuſtoms, and ſuſpicious of alterations; few of them at firſt vouchſafed to imitate it. But the example of a monarch famed for piety, and the condemnation of the judicial duels by the eccleſiaſtics, wrought a conſiderable effect *. As by St. Lewis's inſtitutions, fines or coſts were allowed, in caſe the appeal for default of juſtice or falſe judgment was proved erroneous and diſannulled; many of the lords were alſo tempted by the conſideration of gain, gradually to admit the proof by witneſſes, and the practice of appeals in their courts. It is evident how the admiſſion of the one and the other would operate to the prejudice of the juriſdiction of the barons, and the advancement of the king's juridical authority. Conſidered as the ſupreme head of all the great vaſſals, the courts of the ſovereign became the laſt reſort of all appeals. St. Lewis is ſaid, after the battle of Taillebourg, to have got Henry III. of England to acknowledge them in his French dominions. New and higher notions of the royalty alſo began to be propagated by the monkiſh writers of the age. The political principles of the nation verged towards a revolution; the progreſs of which was ſlow indeed, but

* L'Eſprit des Loix, ibid. chap. 35.

not

not the leſs auſpicious and ſure, that it ſeemed to be grounded on a turn of the national opinions and maxims. The private wars of the lords, which could not yet be altogether prohibited, were ſubjected to a delay or reſpite of forty days before they were commenced by the adverſe parties, which was called the king's quarantine. Such were the effects of St. Lewis's government; even though he ſeveral times left his kingdom to proſecute the Croiſades; and the feudal cuſtoms, by their longer continuation, may be ſuppoſed to have become the more fixed and unalterable in the nation.

1720 and 1285. Reigns of Philip the Hardy, and of Philip-le-bel.

In the following reigns of Philip, ſurnamed the Hardy, and Philip-le-bel, the conſequence of St. Lewis's policy became apparent, and would have been perhaps ſtill more remarkable, if the latter of thoſe princes had not been too eager and precipitant in his meaſures for advancing the royal power, as well as ſhewn a reſtleſs ſpirit of ambition and enterprize, which diſturbed the domeſtic and external peace of his kingdom. In many reſpects, however, his forward and bold management proved ſucceſsful. We reſerve for more particular conſideration in the following hiſtory, his inſtitution of the parliament of Paris, as a ſovereign fixed court of juſtice, and his aſſembling of the firſt ſtates general of France, that the account of each of thoſe conſtitutional and permanent eſtabliſhments of the ſtate and monarchy, may be ſeen in one diſtinct view *. Here it is only neceſſary to obſerve, with reſpect to them, that by the erection of the parliamentary tribunal, the peers and lords reſigned, or loſt their right and power of judgment in the laſt reſort in feudal and civil cauſes, and retained them only

* Boulainvilliers, let. 6.

by

PART I. by a precarious hold in perſonal and criminal ones. They yielded or forfeited them to an inferior claſs of men, altogether diſtinct from themſelves; to eccleſiaſtics of the lower rank and lay counſellors of law, who would be naturally led to ſhew their importance and figure in the magiſtracy, by oppoſing the antient privileges and authority of the lords, and eſtabliſhing principles of juriſprudence ſubverſive of them. What the royal bailiffs atchieved in the way of bold invaſion of the ſeignioral juriſdictions in the provinces, the counſellors of parliament would be ready to vindicate upon their new theories of law. This was a great ſuccour to the royalty. Philip-le-bel, no doubt, counted upon it, and took the farther chance of advancing his dignity and intereſt, by means of the convention of the three orders of the kingdom *. Having before this made a truce with England, and married his ſiſter to Edward I. and his daughter to the prince of Wales, with Guienne for her dowry; he defied the oppoſition of pope Boniface the VIIIth, on the ſubject of the tenths levied on the clergy of France, and other points controverted by the ſee of Rome. He even found ſupport againſt the fulminations of the pope; but his loſs of the fatal battle of Courtray againſt the Flemings, in which a vaſt number of the French nobility engaged in his ſervice, periſhed, proved a hard blow to his fortune; and his perpetual neceſſities, which he ſtill endeavoured to ſupply by the moſt ignominious ſhifts and expedients, tended to expoſe his character, and render him odious. Arbitrary practices on the mints, and debaſing and altering the value of the coin, were the main artifices he employed to raiſe money †. By means of this wretched policy, if he made ſome temporary gain, and, as it is alledged, confounded the barons in

* Henault, p. 178. † Boulainvilliers, let. 7.

the

the exerciſe of their right of coinage; he endangered his authority; alienated the minds of all ranks of people from him, and rendered the concluſion of his reign embroiled by the aſſociations of the nobles and clergy, to controul his uſurpations and the changes made by him in the antient government.

1314. Reigns of Lewis X. called Hutin, and of Philip-le-bel's two other ſons.

If the political ſtate of the monarchy had been the ſame it was in the beginning of St. Lewis's reign, unprepared for raſh exerciſes of the ſovereign power, it ſeems evident that Philip-le-bel would either never have tried the projects he did, or found it impracticable to bring them to any tolerable iſſue. The diſcontents and indignation he raiſed among the barons would have proved fatal to the royal power, or at leaſt have turned things back to the condition in which they were under Lewis-le-Gros. Leagues among the nobles and people in eight of the provinces or counties, of which Boulainvilliers gives a * ſpecimen from the originals preſerved in the treaſury of Chartres, were too formidable to be encountered by Lewis X. called Hutin; a prince of weak capacity, and from his years void of judgment and experience in government. But the ferocity of the feudal maxims was conſiderably abated. Even amidſt their recent and juſt provocations againſt Philip-le-bel, the barons, who had learned to premiſe a delay to their private wars †, and alſo to ſuſpend them altogether during thoſe carried on by the king, were now prevailed upon to hearken to the offers which were directly made by Lewis Hutin, of a redreſs of their complaints, and a reformation of all late abuſes. The count de Valois, the king's uncle, who had the chief direction of affairs, being ſent at the head of ſeveral commiſſioners into the provinces; the com-

* Ibid.

† Henault, p. 178.

PART I. motions were prevented, and the nobles pacified by ſeparate treaties, or articles of agreement, which were to be ratified by the king's letters. Thoſe ordinances or grants of Lewis, are what admirers of the feudal conſtitution have called the titles of the antient French liberty. By the extracts given of them it appears, that the policy of the fiefs and the power of the barons were reduced to that footing, that they could neither be quite overthrown by the efforts of the royal power, nor yet ſupport themſelves againſt it. In this reign, and in thoſe of Philip-le-bel's two other ſons, Philip-le-long and Charles IV. the nation may be conſidered as having paſſed into a middle-ſtate, in which the kings dared to aſſume the tone and authority of ſovereigns of the people, or of the ſeveral orders and communities of the kingdom; while the feudal cuſtoms and the untamed ſpirit of the nobles reſiſted, or reluctantly endured the new exertion and check of their public and legiſlative authority. It is evident that thoſe haughty vaſſals, who had long conſidered their right of war as the guard of their independent privileges, thought it now eligible to treat with their kings about the tenor of them; and, inſtead of repelling by main force the continual aſſaults which the royal bailiffs made on their juriſdictions, were ſatisfied to expect the correction of thoſe abuſes from him, and to have the conteſted limits of power and authority on both ſides adjuſted, by letters and writs iſſued in the ſovereign's name.

IT was evident, however, notwithſtanding all the conceſſions granted by Lewis Hutin, that the royalty had gained the aſcendant, and would ſoon ſurmount the remaining oppoſition*. The

* Boulainvilliers, let. 7.

charters,

charters, though copious and particular as to many articles of right inſiſted on by the nobles, were interſperſed with reſervations and exceptions of caſes, which rendered their explication ambiguous. That of Normandy, it is obſervable, was the only one conceived in terms ſo poſitive and explicit, that in future ordinances it became uſual to derogate from its validity, by a ſpecial clauſe: and hence the ſame formality is ſtill retained in ſome arrets iſſued by the king at this day. The number and diverſity of thoſe lettets patent, which were granted in favour of particular lords, and to ſeveral bailiwicks as well as to counties, and the confederacies of provinces, may alſo be reckoned to have degraded their general authority, and obſtructed their regular influence. From the nature and mode of this accommodation with the barons, the kings learned how to eſtabliſh their own authority, by managing ſeparate treaties with them, and by gratifying ſome with conceſſions, in order to gain and diſunite them from the reſt. The conteſted point of the right of coinage was left undetermined *. Lewis Hutin only pretended to regulate the weight and allay of the ſpecie fabricated by the lords. Their right of private war, as more pernicious to themſelves than prejudicial to the royalty, under the reſtrictions mentioned, was reſigned to them. In this poſture the political government ſtood till the following reigns of Philip-le-long and Charles IV. the two ſons of Philip-le-bel, when the privilege of the mint was purchaſed from moſt of the barons. To raiſe money †, the ſerfs in the royal domains were encouraged to buy their freedom, and ſome roturiers were ennobled by letters patent ‡. Is is a miſtake to ſuppoſe, with Boulainvilliers and others, that the latter were incapable of becoming gentry before this period. It

1316. and 1322.

* Ibid. let. 8. † Henault, p. 183. ‡ L'Abbe de Mably, tom. ii. p. 242.

PART I. was the model of ennobling them, which was new; but formerly the poſſeſſion of a fief-noble had advanced them to this rank.

1328. Reign of Philip VI. ſurnamed de Valois.

THE reign of Philip VI. called de Valois, preſents a new and ſignal period. A failure or break of the direct male-line of the Capetian race having happened, it opens with a diſpute about the right of ſucceſſion to the crown of France. Edward III. of England maintained his right to it in oppoſition to that of Philip de Valois. By the pretenſions of each of them, the right of the daughters of France, of whom there were ſeveral ſurviving, was diſregarded. This * excluſion of the females had indeed taken place, after the death of Lewis Hutin; when during the pregnancy of Clementina of Hungary his widow, Philip-le-long was admitted firſt to the regency, and then, in preference to Jane, Lewis's daughter by a former marriage, to the inheritance of the crown. Charles IV. had alſo ſucceeded by the ſame rule againſt the claim of his brothers daughters. But it will be proper to enquire upon what known principle, rule, or law of the monarchy, this excluſive right of the males had been adopted? The ſeveral branches of the royal race had divided about the queſtion, and taken different ſides; when Philip-le-long, then count of Poictiers, pretended, as preſumptive heir, to take poſſeſſion of the regency. Even the count de la Marche, his brother, and his uncle the count de Valois, and others who had an intereſt in maintaining the right of the males, for ſome time had oppoſed his title. If we credit the general accounts of hiſtorians, who follow the beaten tract, and copy one another, with reſpect to the iſſue of this conteſt; we will take it for granted, that a regard to what was afterwards called, by way

State of the argument about the Salic law.

* Louvet, tom. i. p. 42. Henault, p. 190.

of eminence, the *Salic law* of the kingdom, not only affected the judgment of the princes and barons, but produced the important agreement or deciſion of Vincennes, by which Philip was eſtabliſhed in the regency as his right; and conclude that an article of an antient law among the Franks, which * ſaid, "*no part of the Salic lands ſhall paſs to the females*," a law which gave a rule about an allodial and paternal eſtate, as diſtinguiſhed from an acquired one, and from which cuſtom had early derogated, which had no reference to the royalty, and had ſcarce been heard of in many centuries, proved the argument and foundation of what was now tranſacted, about the excluſion of daughters from the inheritance of the royal dignity †. But other attentive and judicious French writers allow, that this Salic law could have no authority, as indeed it had no exiſtence as a maxim or rule reſpecting the ſucceſſion to the crown; though, in ſupport of the excluſive right of the males, the great point then promoted, it might be for want of better reaſons turned into one, and inſiſted upon with equal propriety, as Froiſard, who wrote near about that time, alledges that the French eſteemed their kingdom to be ſo noble, that it ought not to go to females by inheritance.

It is evident alſo, that Philip-le-long owed his advancement to the regency to a former treaty or negotiation; in which, by the appenages to the princes of the blood, and the diſtribution of fiefs and dignities among them, he employed the utmoſt pains and addreſs to obtain their acquieſcence in his elevation. In conſequence of this treaty at Vincennes 1316, Jane, the late king's

* Henault, ibid. L'Eſprit des Loix, liv. xviii. chap. 22.

† Boulainvilliers, let. 8. Louvet, ibid.

daughter,

PART I. daughter, was provided in the inheritance of the crown of Navarre; and Eudes, duke of Burgundy, who was grandſon to St. Lewis by his mother, had Philip's eldeſt daughter given him in marriage. Having thus paved his way, Philip then ſtept from the regency to the crown; but ſtill not without ſome difficulty, and the appearances of reluctance and oppoſition on the part of the princes of the royal line. This was not the period in which ſuch a point of controverſy about the ſucceſſion could have been eaſily determined upon a juridical trial. The inheritance of fiefs by females had already generally taken place, and mens notions of the legal rule and maxim in all ſucceſſions being guided by this principle; the claim and title of daughters to inherit the crown would have found many advocates among the peers and barons *. It is obſerved by the hiſtorians, as what may be deemed a ſingularity and an apparent contradiction, that by a judgment pronounced by the peers under Philip-le-bel, and confirmed under Philip-le-long, Mahault, a daughter of Robert of Artois, had ſucceeded to that county and peerage, in oppoſition to the claim of Robert the grandſon in the direct line, and ſupported, at the coronation along with the other peers, the crown on the head of Philip-le-long, who excluded from the poſſeſſion of it the daughter of Lewis Hutin. From the cuſtom of particular provinces it is pretended, indeed, that there were ſome fiefs *feminine*, and others appropriated to the male line; but this diſtinction was by no means regularly maintained, and could never form a rule for debarring daughters from the kingdom. We cannot, therefore, reckon, that either the influence of a Salic law formerly owned in the monarchy, or the principles admitted about the inheritance of fiefs, could avail to fix ſuch an order in the

* Henault, ibid. Boulainvilliers, ibid.

tranſmiſſion of the crown. A regard to what appeared to be the uſage of the kingdom for a long courſe of time, afforded colour and ſome ground to ſuppoſe a ſtanding regulation, which had never been; and a favourable conjuncture improved by a vigilant prince, brought the critical queſtion to a quick deciſion; and the advancement of Charles IV. to the royal dignity upon the ſame principle, added ſuch a ſanction to the practice as rendered it indiſputable.

PHILIP DE VALOIS, placed in the ſame circumſtances as Philip-le-long, had to expect the event of the widow queen's pregnancy. It was in this interreign that Edward III. diſputed the regency with him; the poſſeſſion of which was conſidered by both as the preliminary ſtep to the throne. They both claimed the dignity, as has been obſerved, upon the rule now followed, of the incapacity of daughters to inherit the crown. Though * the king of England derived his title from his mother Iſabella, daughter to Philip-le-bel, it behoved him to admit this principle, or acknowledge his pretenſions to be inferior to thoſe of the daughters of the later kings. But he preſumed that women might tranſmit to their ſons what they could not perſonally inherit; and that, both in reſpect of proximity of blood, and of repreſentation in the deſcending line, his title would be judged preferable to that of his competitor. Edward was the grandſon of Philip-le-bel, and the nephew of three deceaſed kings; while Philip de Valois was only the brother's ſon, and the couſin german. The deciſion in this caſe, if it had depended on propinquity, could not have admitted of ſuch doubt, as, before that time, had caſt up in queſtions with reſpect to collateral ſucceſſion. It was by no means a nice or ambiguous caſe,

* Mezerai Abbregé Chronol. oct. edit. tom. iv. p. 42. Henault, p. 202.

like

PART I. like that of Bruce and Baliol, whoſe contention for the crown of Scotland became famous in Europe; and the chronicles teſtify that moſt of the canoniſts and civilians of France, who were conſulted upon the right of ſucceſſion, would have determined it in favour of Edward. But the peers and barons of the kingdom, regarding the blood of France in the male line, more than the claim of a foreign prince ſupported on nearer propinquity by a female, pronounced the queſtion to be already decided in the kingdom ever ſince the acceſſion of Philip-le-long, and maintained that a right which the daughters of France were incapable of inheriting themſelves, could not be imparted or conveyed by them. In conſequence of this judgment, when Jane of Evreux, the widow queen, was delivered of a daughter, Philip de Valois obtained quiet poſſeſſion of the kingdom.

WHEN we conſider how the feudal kingdoms of Europe, deſtitute of conſtitutional laws and principles, were expoſed, from various emergencies unprovided againſt, to be diſturbed by inteſtine quarrels about inheritance of crowns; it may be reckoned fortunate for the monarchy of France, that a deciſion was embraced, and an eſtabliſhment formed upon this important point, which tended to throw off controverſy, and limit within narrower bounds all future competitions. The preſent conſtitution, which laid aſide ſucceſſion in the female line, appears from a ſurvey of the French hiſtory to have actually produced this happy effect. Inſtead of the bloody conteſts for the royalty, ſo frequently occurring in the annals of other kingdoms, not an inſtance of ſuch a diſpute is found. But it is a circumſtance no leſs ſingular and remarkable, that the internal diſturbance which France avoided by this means, and the civil blood ſhe ſpared, did not avail her, or prevent the ſufferings of the kingdom

kingdom on account of pretenſions to her crown. Edward III. of England inſiſting upon his rejected title, began a war with France, which in ſome degree had the pernicious effects of a civil one; and proving equally fatal to her quiet and her glory, was continued with interruptions for about as long a period as that which was kindled in England between the houſes of York and Lancaſter *. Philip, who was victorious over the Fleemings; who, with the accuſtomed oſtentation, received in the church of Amiens the perſonal homage of Edward for Guienne, and projected an expedition to the holy land, ſoon found himſelf obliged to defend the kingdom from the invaſion of the Engliſh. The two rival monarchs divided the auxiliary powers of the neighbouring ſtates between them. On the French ſide were engaged, the kings of Bohemia, of Scotland, and of Navarre, and ſeveral other petty princes and dukes. On that of the Engliſh, ſtood the emperor Lewis of Bavaria, the cities of Flanders, with the count of Hainault, and ſome German princes. Such an arrangement of the European princes in the quarrel of two leading ones, was a novelty, from which the gradual advancement of the royal power above the feudal anarchy in the ſeveral ſtates may be inferred. The firſt event of this famous contention between Philip and Edward was the ſea-fight of Sluys, in which the Engliſh gained the victory. Edward purſuing his advantage, throws his army into Flanders, with a deſign to penetrate by St. Omer and Tournay into France. A truce intervenes; but the war in a ſhort time after is renewed. Edward lands again at la Hogue in Normandy, fights and gains the battle of Caen, in which de Guines, the conſtable of France, is taken priſoner. The country along the Seine is laid waſte with

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June, 1346.

* De Serres Hiſtoire General. Mezerai, tom. iv. p. 14.

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fire and ſword, almoſt to the walls of Paris. Edward turns toward Picardy, where, after a defeat given to the French at Blanquelaque, Philip encounters him in perſon with his grand army. The battle of Creſſy, ſo celebrated for the valour of the Engliſh, and the fortune of their monarch, is fought. Such a victory over the French, whoſe army was more than triple in number to that of the Engliſh, exalted the courage of the latter to a height which ſhewed itſelf in future periods of their wars in France. Edward's ſucceſſes and campaigns were cloſed with the ſiege of Calais, which employed him a year before it ſurrendered.

Battle of Creſſy.

Auguſt 1346.

WHEN France loſt the battle of Creſſy, and ſunk under the arms and fortune of the Engliſh monarch, ſhe appeared by having aſſemblies of the ſtates general, a court of peers, and a court of parliament at Paris, to have become an entire kingdom, connected together by the ſame general ties of government; but ſhe had not yet attained to ſuch a political ſituation. The policy of Philip-le-bel, who firſt convocated the ſtates, had effectuated a coalition of ſeveral parts, but not of the whole members of the monarchy. The imperfection of the union was not only the more apparent, from the conſtitution of thoſe firſt ſtates; but was, with reſpect to particular branches of the kingdom, actually the more confirmed. In Burgundy, Bretagne, Guienne and Flanders, four great fiefs of the crown, the feudal independence ſtill ſubſiſted almoſt in its original vigour *. The kings, who had reduced the licentious privileges of the barons, had only made ſome faint attacks on the rights of thoſe powerful vaſſals. As they affected, and were able to ſupport their antient feudal eſtabliſhment, they diſdained or ſhunned being

* L'Abbe de Mably, tom. i. p. 188.

conjoined

conjoined with the aſſemblies of the ſtates, which were conſidered to be the original of new contributions and taxes, and to be made chiefly ſubſervient to the neceſſities of the crown. On account of this disjunction they ſeemed to be the more ſeparated; and being regarded by the other united members of the ſtate as ſtudious only of exempting themſelves from the public burdens, and attentive to maintain their own ſovereign rights, they came to be viewed altogether in the light of aliens and enemies; and the courſe of time and of events ſhewed how juſtly they might be held for ſuch *. Beſides, the combination of the ſtates did not include that of all the diſtricts of the provinces, out of which they were formed. There was ſtill a diſtinction between the countries called Languedoil, and the cuſtom countries; the latter of which were governed independently by their own particular laws and forms, and ſome of them had particular aſſemblies for the adminiſtration of their common affairs. After this manner the county of Thouloufe and other great lordſhips of Languedoc, ſome of which became fiefs of the crown only in the end of the reign of Philip de Valois, were ruled under a lieutenant general appointed by the king. We may eaſily conceive from this view of the monarchy, how open France was laid on all ſides to foreign attacks, and how weak and incomplete her internal union and ſtrength would be found. It alſo deſerves obſervation, that the diſputes that happened about the ſucceſſion to ſeveral fiefs of the crown, at a period when the order and rules of inheritance were in a great meaſure vague and undetermined, would often create enemies as well as beget friends, to the kings; who, in ſuch proceſſes before the court of peers, would diſcover their particular partialities, and their intereſted aims, and

* Boulainvilliers, let. ix. and x.

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not always allow juſtice and the general cuſtoms to take their courſe. Of ſuch prejudice ariſing to the royalty, from thoſe judgments about the poſſeſſion of fiefs, the preſent reign affords two examples; one already mentioned of Robert of Artois, who again revived his proceſs; and the other of John, Count of Montfort, who upon the death of his brother without iſſue, claimed the ſucceſſion to the dutchy of Bretagne *. We enquire not whether the procedure of Philip de Valois againſt Robert, who was his brother-in-law, might juſtly be founded, nor inſiſt upon the contrariety of the principle of judgment in the two caſes compared with each other. It is ſufficient to take notice, that by the expulſion of Robert of Artois, the king of England found an ardent inſtigator and aſſociate of his enterpriſe; and that the deciſion againſt Montfort kindled a war in Bretagne, of which Edward availed himſelf. At this period, when the kings began to exert their civil authority for the ſuppreſſion of conſpiracy; their impotence, and want of ſufficient power, as well as their ambitious paſſions, induced them ſometimes to accompliſh their purpoſe by ſurpriſe or ſtratagem; a method, which, according to the general notions of thoſe times of chivalry, was deemed diſhonourable and odious. The arreſtment of fourteen nobles of Bretagne, ſuſpected to be in league with the count of Montfort, and the king of England, when they came in the interval of a truce to the celebration of the marriage of the duke of Orleans at Paris, reflected a particular reproach on the conduct and character of Philip de Valois. Their deaths on a ſcaffold, without the form of a trial, unprecedented even in thoſe times of violence, were generally abhorred. Such executions in cold blood, though ſupported by juſtice, being the averſion of a martial age,

* Henault, p. 206. Boulainvilliers, let. 8. Mezerai, tom. iv. p. 43.

Philip,

Philip, who ventured upon ſuch an example of them, would diſguſt the nobles, and weaken the attachment of ſome to his ſervice in the war with Edward *. From the diſcontents about the taxes in the beginning of it, ſome aſſociations like thoſe in the reign of Philip-le-bel were formed; and to appeaſe them it ſeems to have coſt Philip the renewal of ſome charters, and an engagement that no tailles ſhould be impoſed without evident neceſſity, and the conſent of the ſtates general. We conclude the ſurvey of this reign with obſerving, that the juriſdictions and ſecular privileges of the clergy, which had been formerly expoſed to the rude and unſkilful aſſaults of the feudal lords and barons, now fell under the animadverſion of the court of parliament. This was an effect of the eſtabliſhment of that body of no leſs importance to the civil rights of the kingdom and the royalty, than the blow they had given to the judicial powers of the lords. The combat againſt the eccleſiaſtical enormities was now undertaken by the counſellors of law on the footing of argument, and the clergy were required to ſhew the foundation of their temporal authority †. At a conference held with a number of the biſhops, in preſence of the king and court, Peter de Cugnieres, the king's advocate, was heard upon this intereſting ſubject of debate, and an anſwer was made for the church by two of her moſt learned prelates. Though Cugnieres arguments went little beyond the depth of the times, the defenders of the ſacred order chiefly exclaimed againſt the impious and heretical tendency of them. This was altogether a new field of controverſy, in which the judges were ſtill leſs converſant than the parties. The king pauſed a while, but not daring to offend the

* Ibid.

† Paſquier, liv. iii. chap. 33.

church,

PART I. church, ſoon iſſued an arret in favour of the rights ſhe poſſeſſed. It is ſaid that a figure of de Cugnieres, with a monkey's head, was afterwards made to officiate in the great church of Paris in extinguiſhing the lights. But the clergy gained only a temporary triumph. The counſellors of parliament having got into the tract of the argument, ceaſed not to purſue it, till they obtained that reſtraint on the eccleſiaſtical juriſdiction called the *appeal as for abuſe* *. It was Philip de Valois who procured the ceſſion of Dauphiny from Humbert II. prince of the houſe of la Tour du Pin; but the hiſtorians fail of exactneſs in affirming, that by the condition of the grant, the eldeſt ſon of France was to bear the title of Dauphin. In the agreement, Humbert nominated Philip's ſecond ſon to ſucceed to it, though in the following reigns it was transferred to, and ever after aſſumed by the eldeſt of the king's ſons.

1350. Reign of John. THE perſonal qualities of the kings may be reckoned to have riſen in their value and importance to the kingdom, in proportion to the increaſe and augmentation of the royal power. Events may be then more juſtly referred to their conduct, and the good or ill of the ſtate and nation allowed to be produced by their particular genius and character, or to be in a great degree dependent upon them. The political ſituation of France, perhaps ſtill exacted more qualities and virtues in her kings, than could be ſuppoſed in the ordinary courſe of things, to have fallen to their ſhare. But reckoning what they ought to have been, according to the proportion of power they exerted, and to the exigencies of the ſtate; it may be ſaid, that the faults imputable to Philip de Valois were

* Henault, p. 210.

aggravated

aggravated in the perſon and character of John his ſon and ſucceſſor. The ſovereign authority in arreſting and puniſhing delinquents, or ſuſpected enemies, then aſſumed by the kings, a power, which was ſuſpicious to the nobles, and required to be cautiouſly uſed, was exerciſed by him with as much impetuoſity and leſs judgment than by his father *. Hiſtory informs us, that the count d'Eu, conſtable of France, was impriſoned, and without a proceſs beheaded by John in the beginning of his reign, as a traitor, who held intelligence with the Engliſh. As there was no public indictment or trial, it may be juſtly alledged, that he fell a ſacrifice to the ſuſpicion of the king, and even upon the ſuppoſition of his guilt, that his death was an unwarrantable violence. It is evident, however, that the Engliſh monarch's bold and ſucceſsful proſecution of his claim to the crown of France, had made many ſecret conſpirators, who hoped for impunity in the open breach of their allegiance from ſuch powerful protection. In ſuch circumſtances of the ſtate, when the uſual courſe of trial afforded opportunity for the evaſion of the accuſed, king John, as his predeceſſor had done, preſumed to diſpenſe with it. But a little time ſhewed to what a height faction and outrage might proceed in a kingdom ſo recently founded on principles diſcordant with the feudal eſtabliſhment; and which, being attacked by a foreign power, required a political ſupport, that from the irregularity and unſettled ſtate of its laws and government could not be found.

WITHOUT reckoning the intervention of the Engliſh war, it may be affirmed that, by the appearance of ſuch a perſonage upon the ſtage, as Charles king of Navarre was, a ſtate, which had attained

* De Serres Hiſt. Henault, p. 212.

PART I. to a much firmer eſtabliſhment than France might yet boaſt of under the wiſeſt of her kings, could not avoid being thrown into a fermentation. He was ſon to Lewis, count of Evreux, by his ſpouſe Joan, daughter to Lewis Hutin; to whom, as has been obſerved, the crown of Navarre had been given. A prince of the blood, both by his mother and father, and ſon-in-law to king John; his great inheritances, his alliances, his imagined prerogatives and pretenſions, gave him dignity and intereſt in the kingdom, which united in one of more inſignificant parts, might have proved prejudicial to the public peace; but veſted in him they were ſufficient to harraſs the royalty and the nation *. He is alledged to have poſſeſſed many of thoſe ſhining and agreeable qualities, which being naturally ſuppoſed congenial with a good heart, were rendered extremely pernicious by ſuch a want of it as he had. He was ſpirited, eloquent, and had the ſhew of a liberal mind. His firſt ground of quarrel was, that the king had detained from him the counties of Champagne and Brie, that belonged to him in his mother's right. As they bordered on the diſtrict of Paris, they had been, by an arret from the king, annexed to the crown, and other lands aſſigned to him as an equivalent for them. The king of Navarre claimed part of theſe territories as his wife's dowry, and inſiſted on the wrong done to him, eſpecially when a grant was made of Angouleſme, at firſt included in the equivalent to the conſtable Charles d'Eſpagne. Finding the king heſitate about the ſatisfaction required, he ſet out from Evreux with a party of his followers, and ſurpriſed the caſtle of this favourite of the king, and killed him in his bed. He boldly vindicated this criminal action, by letters he wrote to the king himſelf, and

* De Serres Hiſt. Henault, p. 212. Mezerai, ibid. p. 89.

to ſeveral of the chief cities of the kingdom. Having ſet this daring and dangerous example of private revenge, and endeavoured to juſtify it by arguments too much favoured by the lawleſs principles of the times; he further ſhewed how reſolute behaviour might brave the weakneſs of the royalty and of public juſtice. Having refuſed to compear before the king until one of his ſons was given as a hoſtage for his ſafety, and prevailed even in this ignominious article, he eaſily got himſelf abſolved after a mock trial. Diſcovering the ſame inſolent and ſeditious ſpirit, he was by the artifice of the Dauphin Charles, drawn into the caſtle of Rouen, where he was taken priſoner. The count de Harcourt and three others of his aſſociates, were immediately beheaded by the king's order; and Navar himſelf was ſhut up in cloſe cuſtody. His brother Philip, and Gefroy of Harcourt, uncle to him that was put to death, propagate an inflammatory warning to the nobles of king John's perfidiouſneſs and cruelty. They declare openly for the king of England, and haſten to ſeek vengeance from his arms. The nobility are divided in their opinions about the king's procedure, and the cities and communities blame him for giving ſuch occaſion for rekindling a dangerous war. The Engliſh are ſoon diſpoſed and prepared to take this ſignal for invading the kingdom. We may judge king John to have been raſh and injudicious in furniſhing a pretence to the king of Navarre to become his adverſary; but is it eaſy to be ſuppoſed with Boulainvilliers, that one of his character could have been quieted or attached to the intereſt of the royalty, by benefactions? On both ſides it may be reckoned, that the diſregard of law and the violence were equal; whence is ſeen a true picture of that period of the French monarchy, in which the kings took the ſword of juſtice into their hands, while they wanted proper authority or power to wield it with efficacy. This

PART I. ſtruggle about the execution of juſtice continued long in the feudal kingdoms, after the lords had loſt their independent privileges of juriſdiction. In them, as the expoſition already given may evince, no ſubordination, order, or rule was promoted by the immediate influence of a ſovereign or public authority, without the intervention of time, and the gradual alteration of the antient cuſtoms.

ON account of the neceſſitous and troubled ſituation of the kingdom, the aſſemblies of the ſtates general, or thoſe of particular provinces *, were called by king John every year of his reign, previous to the battle of Poictiers. Though Philip de Valois, after ſeveral bargains with the barons about the right of coinage, had aſſumed the ſole power of the public mints †, the value and currency of the ſpecie made by him and his ſucceſſors ſtill continued a perplexity, which needed to be adjuſted by the ſtates. Upon the eve of the war with Edward, their council and aid were formally required by John, who appointed them to deliberate upon the number of troops neceſſary to reſiſt the enemy, on the ſums requiſite for paying them, and on the ways and means for raiſing thoſe ſubſidies. Inſtead of a general capitation tax, which the king demanded, they adhered to their former ſcheme of duties and impoſts on commodities for a year; and inſiſted on being allowed the nomination and choice of perſons to collect and receive the contributions. To the laſt clauſe, which was a novelty, and ſeemed both a diſtruſt and a reſtriction of the royal authority; they ſubjoined a repreſentation of the public grievances by the debaſing of the coin, and of the impoſitions and abuſes committed by the traitants or uſurers, and the former collectors of the reve-

* Henault, p. 212. † Boulainvilliers, let. 8.

nues. Taking the opportunity of ſuch important deliberations, the ſtates proceeded further, and turned the ordinance, with reſpect to the levies and ſubſidies, into a formal charter of public immunities and privileges, conſiſting of many particular articles. In this firſt eſſay made by the deputies to arrogate to themſelves a ſhare of the executive power of the ſtate, and to preſcribe a rule of adminiſtration and limits of authority to the king, they were unfortunate; and the failure of their aim may be attributed to their too early preſumption and confidence in their ability to reform and arrange a government, ſtill disjointed and unpliable in its conſtituent parts, as well as to the intrigues and factious ſchemes that were then puſhed on by Charles of Navarre and others, in a way ſufficient to confound all deliberations in behalf of the public intereſt. Had the deputies conſidered their own ſtrength, and propoſed only ſome ſuch regulation and management with reſpect to the ſubſidies, as they were certain could be executed: had they avoided the difficult and odious employment of levying the public money, and made a nomination of commiſſioners, not of their own body, but accountable to the king and the meeting of the ſtates, they might have eſtabliſhed their reputation and credit, and probably have now laid a foundation for their ſharing the ſovereign power; and a king John of France, from a dread of the victorious arms of Edward, might have been the author of a durable charter for the eſtabliſhment of the public rights of the kingdom, reſembling that which John of England, when overmatched by the Engliſh barons, aſſiſted by the French king's ſon, granted to them *. This was in ſome ſort the caſe. The king, though unwilling and irreſolute for ſome time, was obliged to give way, and paſs the ordinance drawn

* Boulainvilliers, let. 9.

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up by the ſtates. But the deputies had not foreſeen, or had calculated improperly about the iſſue of their ſchemes. When they met a few months after to put the finiſhing hand to their buſineſs, ſeveral of their members were found abſent, and the produce of their ſubſidies was perceived to fall far ſhort, by the refuſal of ſeveral provincial diſtricts to ſubmit to the impoſts. They were obliged to adopt the king's propoſal of a capitation or poll tax; an alteration which diſcredited their wiſdom, and ſubverted their former ordinance. However, they got this aid put upon the footing they deſired; their commiſſioners being appointed to manage the collection of it. But this ſpecies of power, as it was unſuitable, proved rather a prejudice to their general intereſt and authority. All their preſent reſolutions paſt in a hurry, while the Engliſh invaded the kingdom by two quarters. The duke of Lancaſter had landed in Normandy with four thouſand men, and in conjunction with Philip of Navarre, urged the revolts of the towns of that province. At the ſame time young Edward, prince of Wales, at the head of eight thouſand Engliſh and provincial troops of Guienne, penetrated into the Limouſin and Poictou. King John, preparing to repel the enterpriſe on Normandy, changed his reſolution on the increaſe of his troops, and by a concerted march, endeavoured to cut off the retreat of the prince of Wales. He ſucceeds in overtaking him at Maupertuis, two leagues from Poictiers, in a ſtraitened place of the country, where he could not ſafely retire. That gallant prince already famed for valour and heroiſm, was ſenſible of his ſituation, and offered to deliver up the towns and places he had taken, and to ſet at liberty his priſoners, and to make a truce for ſeven years, on condition of being ſuffered to march off unmoleſted. The French king rejects thoſe terms,

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and would be ſatisfied with nothing but Edward's ſurrendering at diſcretion. Conſcious magnanimity and honour inſtigate the prince to dare the unequal combat, and the memory of former victories, animates the courage of his troops. The battle follows, in which the French king attacks his brave enemy *, with an army of eighty thouſand men, and receives a total overthrow; ſix thouſand of his men, of which eight hundred were nobleſſe, being killed in the field, and himſelf, with his youngeſt ſon, remaining priſoner. By his humane and courteous uſage of king John, Edward may be ſaid to have merited ſuch a victory. His unfluſhed temper and benignity reſembled the celebrated patterns of antient Rome or of Greece.

The battle of Poictiers.

September, 1356.

UNLESS France had been favoured with a prince advanced to manly years, and endowed with a prematurity of virtue and prudential conduct, ſuch as Charles the Dauphin, duke of Normandy, diſplayed, ſhe could not have undergone her preſent diſaſter, without ſome ſtrange and perhaps fatal revolution being conſequent to it. Even with this fortunate reſort, which furniſhed all poſſible means for the reparation of the public calamity, the kingdom laboured for ſome time under violent agitations. It was not the loſs ſuſtained, nor the terror of the Engliſh arms, which conſtituted all the diſtreſs of the ſtate and nation. It was augmented by inteſtine diſcord, and the outrage of faction and popular tumults. Charles of Navarre's partizans inſtigated thoſe diſtractions; but the ſpring of them lay deeper, and appeared to derive its energy from the unfixed principles of the government, fluctuating ſtill between the feudal and monarchical ſyſtem †. When the Dauphin, per-

Inteſtine factions.

* De Serres. Henault, p. 214. Mezerai, ibid. p. 98. † Ibid.

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ſonating the king his father with the title only of his *lieutenant*, came to Paris and convened the ſtates; the conſideration neither of the debaſement of the royalty, nor the diſhonour and dangerous circumſtances of the nation, reſtrained them from throwing obſtacles in the way of his acting for the public relief. Proceeding indeed upon the preſumption, that, in the captivity of the king, the chief authority of the ſtate had devolved to them; the deputies, before they formed any reſolutions about the ſubſidies, appointed fifty delegates of their body to hold a conference with the Dauphin. Having demanded his oath of ſecrecy upon the points they had to communicate, thoſe commiſſioners declared it to be the unanimous judgment and requiſition of their conſtituents, that all the officers of the crown, of whom they gave a liſt, ſhould be deprived or ſuſpended from their employments; that his council ſhould be compoſed of twenty-eight members, nominated by the ſtates; that to a certain number whom they ſhould alſo chuſe, commiſſions ſhould be granted, authorizing them to examine the conduct of the officers in the different provinces, and reform their malverſations, and that the coin ſhould be reduced to the proper ſtandard, and the king of Navarre releaſed from his confinement. The Dauphin, who ſhewed dignity and prudence in replying to the article of ſecrecy, endeavoured, by aſking time to adviſe with his council, and alledging the inſufficiency of his powers to determine upon ſuch points, to avoid a direct refuſal of the demands of the ſtates, harſh and alarming as they ſeemed to be. After ſome attempts to negotiate with the ſtates, who offered to provide for the ſubſiſtence of thirty thouſand men at arms, matters were conducted in ſuch a ſhape, that the deputies, without ſhewing their reſentment at the prince's incompliance, further than by drawing up

up the act of their reſolutions, retired to their different homes. It appears, however *, that to obviate the exceptions and clamours of the ſeditious, an ordinance in its general import conſonant to the demands of the ſtates, was ſoon agreed upon and regiſtered in the court of parliament.

Preſumptuous claims of the ſtates general.

It was, however, impracticable by any methods of addreſs or political management, to oppoſe or divert the eruption of the broils of faction. In a ſtate where the king was the captive of war to a foreign enemy, and who had not by any act diveſted himſelf of the ſovereignty, yet whoſe poſſeſſion or exerciſe of it in thoſe circumſtances appeared to be a ſoleciſm upon any principles of government; it was no wonder that feuds, diſtractions and a temporary anarchy enſued. But it deſerves to be remarked, that this flux of diſcord and ſedition was ſuch, both in its form and courſe, as might be expected at that ſtage, and particular conjuncture of the monarchy. The procedure of the ſtates which has been explained, was indeed a violent graſp of the political adminiſtration; but what king John had thought convenient to yield to them, before the battle of Poictiers, may well be reckoned to have paved the way to this higher preſumption and encroachment. Without a knowledge of their place in the government, without the energy of thoſe principles, and ties of ſubmiſſion and allegiance, which, though unaſcertained by explicit laws, cuſtom or general opinion gradually promotes and matures in a civilized ſtate; perceiving, chiefly in conſequence of their own intervention and aſſemblies, the appearance of a general legiſlative power in the kingdom, the ſtates would naturally, in the dejection of the royalty, aſſume prerogative, and pretend to ſupreme authority. But that impulſe

* Boulainvilliers, ibid.

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toward domination, which moved their body, capable perhaps of proceeding in ſome direct courſe to a certain end, operated at the ſame time, with a ſeparate and irregular violence, upon their conſtituents in the nation *. Hardly attached to the intereſt of the ſovereign, and conſidering themſelves in an independent view, as the moſt eminent and important body of the kingdom, the nobles thought of recovering in ſuch a conjuncture, all their antient feudal rights and immunities. Leſs confident of their own ſtrength, but equally diſpoſed to overlook the ſupport they received from, and gave to the royalty; the citizens were bent to maintain the privileges they had acquired, and by all poſſible means to extend and enlarge them. It was obvious that, by a proper union and agreement between thoſe two bodies, their common aim might be accompliſhed. By ſome overtures for a league of mutual ſecurity, which were made, they began to approach each other; but they could not combine. A diſparity of principles and manners, as well as ſeparate views and intereſts, pulled them aſunder. But the appearance itſelf was critical and portentuous to the monarchy. The Dauphin beheld with anxiety this new rotation of the feudal ſyſtem. He found it not difficult by inſinuations to ſow diſcord between parties that had jealouſies and ſome averſions to each other. The cities recollecting the original pretenſions of the lords to unlimited ſway over them, were impreſſed with the apprehenſions and dread of a league with the nobility. They took each their ſeparate courſe of defence againſt the broils that were breaking forth. The nobleſſe declining to appear by their deputies at the meeting of the ſtates, armed their vaſſals and raiſed men for the field; and the citizens laboured to protect themſelves by repairing their walls and ditches. As if the whole maſs of the nation had been at this time

* Ibid. Mezerai, p. 104. Boulainvilliers.

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ſhook to the bottom, the roturiers and peaſants, who hitherto had been paſſive under their oppreſſions, began to flock together in tumultuous troops in the Beauvoiſis and other places, and declared their purpoſe of extirpating all the nobles and gentry. Whether inſtigators from the cities, or the Dauphin's agents, encouraged or connived at thoſe inſurrections, ſeems to be uncertain. In the mean time the following events enſued.

Sedition of the Pariſians.

AFTER the deputies of the ſtate had withdrawn from Paris, the Dauphin found the citizens prone to favour and eſtabliſh their late reſolutions. The diſregard of all principles of loyalty, and the propenſity to anarchy or a feudal independance, which ſeemed to prevail through the kingdom, were chiefly diſplayed in the capital. Notwithſtanding the endeavours of the Dauphin to gain over the ſtates by compliances, an entire reconciliation became impoſſible; when Charles king of Navarre having eſcaped from his confinement, waved the torch of ſedition with greater efficacy. The chief faction of the city, headed by Stephen Marcel, prevot des marchands, Conſac, and Robert le Cocque, biſhop of Laon, had made his cauſe, after the example of the ſtates, a public one. Having obtained a ſafe-guard from the Dauphin, he made his entry into Paris with a conſiderable train, harangued the people, propoſed his demands to the Dauphin's council, into which thoſe nominated by the ſtates had been admitted, and was gratified with the conceſſion of them *. It was a condition reſerved in the truce granted for two years by the king of England, that he might ſupport Charles king of Navarre, and John count of Montfort, in their ſeveral pretenſions. The Dauphin juſtly dreading that the king

* De Serres. Mezerai, ibid. p. 114.

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* Henault, p. 216.

capital, and to join with her in promoting a general reformation. But the towns having too much reaſon to dread the reſult of ſuch a combination with the partizans of faction, refuſed to involve themſelves in it, and they ſaw quickly their apprehenſions juſtified.

HAVING pointed out the riſe of that agitation, into which the ſtate and kingdom were caſt at this period, we enter not into the particular narrative of it. As it proceeded in ſome meaſure from a vain preſumption in Marcel and the biſhop of Laon, that a popular government might be eſtabliſhed in Paris, and extended by the league of the cities through the kingdom; the incidents that attended the conflict between the Dauphin and Charles of Navarre for the ſuperiority, reſembled thoſe which we find in the hiſtory of the broils of the antient petty republics. The capital, beſet with the forces of the two competitors, inclined to favour the one and the other by turns, and diſtracted with cabals and jealouſies, and involved in frequent bloodſhed and ſlaughter, narrowly eſcaped being delivered up by the prevot Marcel to the king of Navarre, and the Engliſh troops he had introduced into it. The Dauphin owed the advantage he gained to the aſſiſtance of the provincial nobility, who became the more attached to his intereſt, by ſeeing his opponent Charles of Navarre make his court to the Engliſh and the factious Pariſians *. He oppoſed the authority of the ſtates aſſembled by him in Champagne and in Picardy, to that maimed convention of them at Paris, which was ſubſervient to the deſigns of the ſeditious cabal †. To aſſign the reaſon and motive for his delaying to take the title of regent of the kingdom for two years, when in his father's captivity faction required the bridle of the

* De Serres. Mezerai, p. 122. † Boulainvilliers, let. 10.

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higheſt authority, has been conſidered as a problem by political ſpeculatiſts on this period of the hiſtory. Beſides that delicacy with reſpect to the king his father, whoſe temper was peculiar, might be Charles's primary motive for this reſerved conduct; it is obvious that, on account of the turbulent condition of the government, his haſty and immediate aſſumption of the name and quality of regent, would have been injudicious, and might have expoſed the ſovereign authority to various improprieties and diſadvantages. With the leſs eminent title of the king's lieutenant general, the Dauphin found it more eaſy to divert the firſt rude aſſaults which were made on the royalty, while he could adminiſter to it every ſupport, which his natural dignity and influence as heir of the kingdom could procure. It may be preſumed that he changed this conduct at the proper criſis, and got himſelf proclaimed regent, when, after a bold and laborious ſtruggle with difficulties, he judged it neceſſary to take the additional help of this more ſolemn title to ſurmount them *. We have not a plain explication from the hiſtorians, whether his aſſumption of the regent's office was a ſimple act, declarative iſſued by him, and verified by regiſtration in the court of parliament, or whether, beſides king John's conſent and approbation, the authority of the ſtates were not alſo interpoſed. The firſt opinion is that which is commonly adopted, as appears from Mezeray and father Daniel. Yet when ſome circumſtances are conſidered, it becomes doubtful. But in whatſoever way the act of regency paſſed, the caſe altogether was too nice and extraordinary to eſtabliſh a rule or precedent, with reſpect to future inſtances of the conſtitution of that office in the kingdom.

* Boulainvilliers, ibid. De Serres. Mezerai, p. 118.

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THE length of the obſervations on this reign makes it neceſſary to conclude the hiſtory of the Engliſh war, and of king John's liberation from captivity in a ſhort paragraph. The firſt conditions of peace tranſmitted from England being, as highly arbitrary and extravagant, rejected by the regent and ſtates of France; Edward, who *during the truce had only afforded an inconſiderable aſſiſtance to John of Montfort, and rather let ſlip the proper criſis for attacking that kingdom, now again croſſed the ſea with a numerous armament. His march by Arras through Champagne and Burgundy, and his progreſs toward the capital, could not be oppoſed. He traverſed thoſe provinces, as he had done formerly, like a conqueror. But Rheims and ſome other towns could not be reduced, and the winter approached; while the Dauphin-regent kept his troops diſpoſed in proper quarters for the defence of Paris. Upon his retreat toward Chartres, he liſtened to other propoſals of an accommodation, which iſſued in the treaty of Bretigny. Guienne, Poictou and other places ceded in full ſovereignty to the Engliſh, and the payment of three millions of crowns of gold for king John's ranſom, with renunciations on Edward's part of his pretenſions to the crown of France, were the principal articles of this famous peace. The motive which carried back John to England where he died, is variouſly explained.

* Henault, p. 216. De Serres.

SECT. IV.

Reign of Charles V. *called* le Sage—*Account of* Appenages—*Death of the Black Prince of Wales, and of Edward* III.—*Recovery of Guienne by Charles*—*Reign of Charles* VI.—*Long period of inteſtine broils from his delirious malady*—*Battle of Agincourt*—*Treaty of Troyes*—*Reign of Charles* VII.—*Treaty of Arras*—*Eſtabliſhment of the Gendarmery*—*Guienne and Normandy reduced.*

THE attempts of the ſtates general to uſurp the functions of the ſovereignty, and the more violent enterprizes of the Pariſian faction, in king John's reign, may be looked upon as the concluſive ſcene of the feudal government in France. From the *Jacquerie* and other popular inſurrections which then enſued, the conceit of the antient independent principles ſunk apace, both among the nobleſſe and the citizens. The diſgrace and diſtreſſes the nation incurred by the Engliſh war, diſpoſed the ſeveral orders to concenter more with the royalty *. Inſtead of being jealous of their right of private wars, the lords were ſatisfied to have an
1364. ordinance publiſhed, forbidding the uſe of it, as long as public enemies continued in the kingdom. The ravages committed by the banditti in the end of the war alſo gave occaſion to another
Reign of Charles V. called le Sage. ordinance, which prohibited arms to be worn by the ſubjects. Such a ſenſible change being apparent in the temper of the nation in the laſt years of king John's reign, the ſucceſſion of Charles-le-ſage to the ſovereignty was auſpicious for improving all the advantages the royalty had gained. But political revolutions have their pace, beyond which it is not eaſy to precipitate them. In every

* Boulainvilliers, ibid. Mezerai, p. 139.

particular

particular age and period, the views of the wiſeſt are ſtill circumſcribed, and whatever deſire and attention the kings may have ſhewn to build up the ſtructure of their power and authority, it is certain from the hiſtory of the Gothic kingdoms in Europe, that in accompliſhing this aim, they launched, all of them, but a very little way out of the political track of their time and period. This obſervation may be made, when we come now to touch upon an uſage of the monarchy yet unmentioned, that of the appenages.

Account of appenages.

THE origin of appenages may be traced back to the foundation of the French monarchy. We have ſeen that, under the firſt race of the kings of the Franks, and alſo under the Carlovingians, the crown rights and the kingdom itſelf were divided among the royal progeny *. When the feudal policy commenced with the third race, the partition of the monarchy ceaſed; and the royalty, inſtead of being ſhared among the ſons, became the ſole inheritance of the eldeſt. The compenſation then made to the younger ſons was a portion of the royal domains; aſſigned them in patrimonial right and property. There ſeems at firſt to have been no proviſion made about the reverſion of theſe domains to the crown, until various alienations of them had induced the kings to alledge, and inſiſt upon a rule to that effect. But the want of immediate heirs, without diſtinctions of the † male and female, was ſtill the only caſe ſuppoſed to infer their reverſion; and in this way, great abſtractions of the crown lands continued to be made by daughters ‡. It is alleged, that Philip-le-bel was the author of what was afterwards called the *law of the appenages*, which reſtricted

* Paſquier, liv. ii. chap. 17. Henault, p. 172. † Louvet, chap. 12. p. 115.
‡ Henault, p. 184.

the

PART I. the poſſeſſion of them to male heirs. After his reign it is certain, that the kings made uſe of this and other arguments to recover the detached parcels of their domains. But while they made ſuch claims upon ſeveral of their vaſſals *, ſometimes without a foundation of right, and from no better motives than avarice or jealouſy, they forbore not to propagate the radical evil, by conferring on their ſons large appenages, with the antient rights of the vaſſals of the crown annexed to them. At this time, king John having got the dukedom of Burgundy into his poſſeſſion, retracted the deed of its re-union with the crown, and made a donation of it to Philip his fourth ſon, that ſtood by him at the battle of Poictiers. It appears that Charles-le-ſage, beſides confirming this gift †, augmented the appenages of his two other brothers, Lewis duke of Anjou and John duke of Berry; giving to the one the dutchy of Orleans, and to the other ſeveral counties, with the government of Languedoc. The conſequence of this policy was felt in the ſubſequent reigns.

THE talents which Charles poſſeſſed were ſuch, that any nation the leaſt obſervant of the actions and character of their ſovereign, might be engaged to confeſs the merit and value of them. In the moſt unfortunate and perilous condition of the monarchy, the French had beheld him, under the greateſt diſadvantages, contend with ſucceſs for the honour of the crown, and the re-eſtabliſhment of the national peace and ſafety. Though his genius was not diſplayed by martial enterprizes, he ſupported the reputation of being a match for his antagoniſts in the field by his political penetration and the ſagacity of his counſels. Edward III. ſaid of him, *that*

* Boulainvilliers, ibid. De Mably, tom. i. p. 191. † De Serres.

there

there was no king armed ſo little and gave him ſo much to do. After the war in Bretagne was terminated by a treaty, and a peace concluded with Charles of Navarre, he was not afraid to begin a quarrel with that victorious monarch. His pretence for it, grounded on the appeals brought by the barons of Guienne to his court againſt the ordinances of the prince of Wales, was artificial, and ſhewed Charles's dexterity to be ſuperior to his regard to the faith of treaties. By the late peace of Bretigny, the full ſovereignty of Guienne being plainly reſigned to the king of England, the admiſſion of appeals to the parliament of Paris became a direct inconſiſtency. Evaſions of the obligations of treaties are eaſily invented, and hiſtorians are generally inclined to recite thoſe of their own nation in the moſt favourable light *. We ſee in Henault the plauſible arguments alledged by the French for the nullity of the treaty of Bretigny; but the real and beſt reaſon for Charles's infringement of it, appears to have been the ſenſe that he and the nation had of the extreme hardſhips of the articles of that peace, which being ſtretched to rigour on account of John's captivity, could not be fulfilled without the greateſt prejudice to the kingdom. Charles, before he ventured to declare war, took care to make the ſtates general judges of the cauſe and motive that induced him to it †. All the proceedings in the negotiations with England were laid before them. He aſſured them that he would be entirely determined by their advice and reſolutions. Engaged by thoſe teſtimonies of their ſovereign's confidence, the deputies of the three orders did not heſitate in voting for a war with Edward, by whom France had already ſuffered ſo much. Without allowing themſelves time to deliberate, the aſſembly reſounded with

* Abbregé Chron. p. 216. † De Serres. Boulainvilliers, ibid.

PART I. acclamations of applauſe, and offers of ſervice and invincible fidelity to their king *. This ardor of the ſtates was not ſuffered to cool when they broke up, but was diffuſed over the kingdom, by means of ſolemn faſts and proceſſions enjoined by the clergy. Charles's addreſs and popularity excited this zealous ſpirit of unanimity and attachment to his ſervice, which the French, amidſt the feudal jars and diſſenſions had not before felt in ſuch a degree; and than which, nothing was more requiſite in a kingdom, weakened and divided by the great acquiſitions from the Engliſh by the treaty of Bretigny.

IN the courſe of the war, Edward, and the prince of Wales his ſon, maintained the reputation of the power of the Engliſh arms, and of their own military proweſs; but it appeared that Charles, who hazarded much by encountering ſuch an enemy, had taken his meaſures with precaution and foreſight. He took the ſtart of them in his preparations, and things were ſo managed in Guienne, that a revolt of many places paved the way to the ſudden conqueſt of almoſt the whole of that province †. No expedition the Black Prince concerted ſhewed more of his military genius than his detaching a flying party into the Bourbonois and Berry, to draw the French forces from Guienne; but he reaped not ſuch fruits as he had formerly done from his martial enterprizes. His warlike renown was indeed crowned by his victory in Spain, where a French army of near thirty thouſand men, which ſupported the revolt of the Caſtilians againſt Peter the Cruel, was vanquiſhed by him; and Bertrand du Gueſclin, Charles's famous general, was taken priſoner. But ſucceſs in this diſtant

* Mezerai, p. 171. † De Serres.

quarter was of the leſs conſequence, and the affairs of Caſtile ſoon took a different turn; while the brave prince found he had contracted a hydropical diſeaſe in this campaign, which obliged him to retire into England, and in a ſhort time brought his life to a period. His father Edward ſurvived him only about a year. After the death of thoſe illuſtrious princes, Charles found little difficulty in obliging all the towns of Guienne to ſubmit, except Bourdeaux and Bayonne; and in other parts little beſides Calais and Cherbourg remained in the power of the Engliſh *. During the continuance of a war ſo expenſive and exhauſting, the aſcendance that Charles attained over the ſtates was apparent. Their pretenſions to interfere in the adminiſtration, or in the management and application of the revenues, were now laid aſide. Complaints or remonſtrances againſt the ſupplies demanded were not even heard from them. The whole authority of the ſtates ſeemed to be reduced to the formality of granting them, while the people were diſpoſed to make a free gift of their contributions to a prince in whom they confided. In this manner did Charles turn the Engliſh war, which in the former reign had almoſt ruined the monarchy, to the eſtabliſhment of it, and of the royal power in the kingdom. He alſo endeavoured to exalt the royal dignity by an ordinance for a great abbreviation of the minority of the heir to the crown.

In the courſe of the following hiſtory, the effect of that proviſional law, now framed by Charles V. upon the important point of the majority of the kings, will be obſerved. Here it is only neceſſary to remark, that though all diſpute was not prevented, the

* Boulainvilliers, ibid.

PART I. acceſſion of his ſon Charles VI. to the crown, at the age of twelve years and nine months, was by means of this prudential meaſure rendered more pacific than otherwiſe might have happened.

1380. THIS reign, far more ill-fated and deplorable to France than any other yet experienced by her, had the moſt favourable aſpect in the beginning. Notwithſtanding Charles's * age placed him under the government of his four uncles, the dukes of Anjou, Burgundy, Berry, and Bourbon, it ſeemed that the unanimity and vigour infuſed into the monarchy in the former reign, were ſufficient to have ſupported it with honour and reputation. A concurrence of fortunate events appeared not only to free the kingdom from foreign attacks, but to ſecure the tranquillity and grandeur of the ſtate and nation †. The conteſt about the homage of John duke of Bretagne being ſettled, the Engliſh were excluded from continuing the war in that quarter. Before Charles was fifteen years of age, the victory of Roſebecque was gained by him over the Flemings, which ſecured the duke of Burgundy's ſucceſſion by his wife to the earldom of Flanders. By the duke of Anjou's expedition into Naples, with an army of thirty thouſand men, to maintain his claim to that realm, the growth of the French ſtate in power and opulence was diſplayed ‡. It was known that the vaſt ſums amaſſed by Charles V. were ſeized upon by Anjou to defray the charges of that enterprize. Great projects began to be formed. A reſolution was taken to repel the Engliſh aſſaults, by carrying the war into that kingdom, to which Richard II. had ſucceeded. The Scots were inſtigated, by ſuccours of men and ammunition ſent to king David, to act in concert with France in the deſigned invaſion

Reign of Charles VI.

* Paſquier, liv. vi. chap. 2. † Henault, p. 232. ‡ Paſquier, ibid. De Serres.

of England. A fleet and land army are prepared, and part of the ſhips equipped in Britanny, having put to ſea, are diſperſed in a ſtorm. But the main embarkation at Sluiſe was ſuſpended by the duke of Berry, who, after an induſtrious delay, appearing at the rendezvous, declared reſolutely againſt the enterprize, and prevailed to have it laid aſide. Jealouſy of the duke of Burgundy, who was the chief counſellor of the undertaking, as much as a conviction of the danger attending it, is reckoned to have prompted him to this oppoſition.

THE oſtentation now made of the grandeur of the crown and ſtate of France was too extravagant and unreaſonable. In a nation that had been ſo lately expoſed to the deſolation of war, and that, from an unprecedented attachment to their late king, had borne the heavieſt taxes; it could not be ſupported without oppreſſing the people. The Pariſians became ſo importunate and clamorous about their being releaſed from the burden of the impoſts, that the king's council at firſt gave way to it. But the guardians, too intereſted in this reduction of the public finances, ſoon altered this reaſonable meaſure *. Pains were taken to induce the people to ſubmit; and at length the ſtates general were convoked in order to procure their aſſent to the maintenance of the revenues, upon the footing they were put during the war. All thoſe endeavours uſed by the court were inſufficient to accompliſh their purpoſe. Having, however, an army now employed in Flanders, and great forces in ſeveral parts of the kingdom at their command, the Princes of the king's council perſiſted in their reſolution, till the Pariſians, provoked into rage, began to mutiny in a violent manner. Aſſaults are made on the farmers and collectors of the impoſts, whoſe houſes are demo-

* Boulainvilliers, let. 11. De Serres.

liſhed,

PART I. liſhed, and ſeveral of them torn in pieces. The example of this ſedition ſpreads into Rouen, Troyes, and other towns. Their tumultuary commotions reſembled thoſe of the burgeſſes of Ghent, called the *white hoods*, with whom indeed * it is alledged they had ſome correſpondence. The coincidence of popular inſurrections about this period, in England, in Flanders and in France, is remarkable. The common people debaſed and almoſt annihilated under the feudal yoke, now endeavoured to ſhew themſelves of importance in the political ſyſtem. In France, as they contributed to the ſubſidies and aids of the ſtate, and in time of war paid the taille or extraordinary taxes, from which the nobles were exempted on account of their military ſervice; it is no wonder that the commons, on whom the great load of the public impoſts fell, were thrown into tumults, by the late grievous augmentation of them. King John's captivity, and the neceſſities of his reign, had obliged the ſtates to grant, beſides a gabbelle or duty upon ſalt, an impoſt of eight deniers in the livre upon all commodities, except inheritances, expoſed to ſale in the kingdom †. Thoſe, with ſeveral other exactions, had been continued under Charles V. and the queſtion now ſeemed to be, whether they were to be rendered permanent. It has been obſerved how the citizens of the capital had failed in a former attempt to new-model the government. Their preſent more juſtifiable oppoſition to the levy of the new taxes, proved alſo moſt unſucceſsful. Beſides, being without proper leaders, and having no union or concert among themſelves, the cities were incapable to reſiſt the power of the government; and ſeveral of them, eſpecially Paris and Rouen, underwent a ſevere chaſtiſe-

* Mezerai, p. 247.

† Boulainvilliers, let. 9. Recherches ſur les finances de France. p. 21.

ment.

ment. Not only heavy fines and compoſitions were exacted, but capital puniſhments were inflicted with ſeverity on many of the townſmen. The king having entered Paris with his army in hoſtile array; the ſight of ſcaffolds and executions terrified the people, who proſtrated themſelves before him, and cried out for mercy. In this manner, the payment of the taxes was forced by means of that military power, which the nation had raiſed for its defence. The nobleſſe who ſerved in the army ſaw it their intereſt to conſpire with the king's governors in pillaging the cities, and were rewarded with a ſhare of the ſpoils.

THOUGH ſuch exerciſe of the ſovereign power was calculated to produce diſaffection and diſorder in the nation, yet from the great authority of the adminiſtrators of the kingdom, who, however jealous of each other, agreed in impoſing the taxes, the tumults ceaſed, and a calm ſucceeded; while, in the mean time, Charles aſſumed the government into his own hands. Notwithſtanding the reſtoration of peace in Flanders, a truce with England, and other circumſtances, which favoured the tranquillity of his reign; it is difficult to judge what might have been the political ſituation of the ſtate, upon the ſuppoſition that this unhappy prince had not been attacked by his delirious malady. But whatever diſturbance the dukes of Burgundy and Bretagne were capable of giving; or whatever other ſymptoms of diſcord and confuſion were diſcoverable, it is certain, that all the diſaſters incident to the monarchy were extremely aggravated by this diſmal event *. The firſt violent acceſs of the king's frenzy enſued, when he marched at the head of his army to attack the duke of Bretagne, who had em-

Acceſs of Charles's frenzy.

* Paſquier, liv. vi. chap. 3.

ployed

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ployed Peter de Craon to murder the conſtable Cliſon in Paris, and ſcreened the aſſaſſin from puniſhment in his dominions. Upon this calamity, the two dukes, his uncles of Burgundy and Berry were inveſted with the ſovereign adminiſtration of the kingdom; the ſtates and parliament having ſuperſeded the title of his only brother Lewis duke of Orleans, on account of his youth*. It was, however, apparent, that the circumſtances of the ſtate, as much as the conſideration of that prince's years, directed this deciſion; which was alſo conformable to the antient cuſtom. Hitherto, in the monarchy, the king's uncles had generally been preferred to the regency or chief adminiſtration of the government, even before his brothers; whom, though grown up to manhood, they exceeded in years and capacity. But when the political rule came to be reduced to a principle, it was underſtood to be juſt and ſuitable, that the immediate heir of the royalty, or firſt prince of the blood, capable of governing, ſhould receive, or be appointed to the cuſtody of that crown to which he might ſucceed. As at this time Charles's caſe was very ſingular and uncommon; the determination of the point would be rendered altogether ambiguous and doubtful. Though the name of a regency was abſtained from, and the uncles of the king were only intruſted with the exerciſe of the ſovereignty during his infirmity, the duke of Orleans ſoon reſented their advancement; and, together with the duke of Bourbon, formed a party to oppoſe their meaſures. This laid the foundation of a rooted diſcord in the court, which was nouriſhed by mutual jealouſies, accuſations and reproaches; both while Charles was afflicted with his diſtemper, and in the intermiſſions of it. After a maſque, in which he unluckily acted, and was

* De Serres. Mezerai, p. 307.

thrown

thrown into a ſudden terror, by the accident of a torch ſetting fire to the combuſtible dreſs of his companions, his malady was confirmed; the reſpites he had being attended with debility of body and mind. Various endeavours were uſed to reconcile the oppoſite factions that diſturbed the court. As the duke of Orleans could not be pacified without being allowed his place in the government, the conjunct authority of the uncles and the nephews was propoſed; and to promote the union of the princes, alliances by marriages between them were concerted. The more they were connected with the royal family and the crown by thoſe connubial bonds, the ſtronger appeared their inſtigation and pretenſions to contend with one another, and to purſue their particular intereſts and their ambitious views, till the nation was plunged into inextricable confuſion and miſery, by their inveterate conteſts.

Civil diſtractions.

A LONG period of inteſtine broils which now enſued, interrupts the particular hiſtory of the French government. No other internal cauſes of the public diſorders, beſides thoſe already pointed out, need be aſſigned. From the imbecillity of Charles, the princes of the blood, charged with the adminiſtration, became conſpirators againſt the honour of the royalty, as well as adverſaries to each other. The reſtraints from fixed principles of loyalty and ſubordination, had by no means acquired influence ſufficient to moderate their ambition, or controul their turbulence. Sovereigns, as has been obſerved, ſeveral of them were in their dukedoms and appenages; they had objects more intereſting to them than the dignity of the crown or the public tranquillity *. The deaths of the two moſt powerful and dangerous of them, the dukes of Bretagne and

* Henault, p. 238. De Serres.

PART I. Burgundy, produced a ſhort interval of peace, but availed not to hinder the diſtractions of the ſtate. John, the heir of Burgundy, having the ſame political views and enmities with his father, but from pride and impetuoſity, leſs capable of diſguiſing them, ſoon ſtated himſelf in oppoſition to the duke of Orleans, to whom the ſole management of affairs was now devolved. The faults and weakneſſes of this laſt prince were of a nature that rendered him as offenſive to many, and as unpopular, as greater vices would have done another character *. Imprudent, prodigal, and from his profuſion avaricious, he raiſed diſguſt againſt himſelf by draining the treaſury, and impoſing new taxes. His adverſary John, whom he endeavoured to thwart in ſeveral high pretenſions, ſaw the advantage to be taken of his injudicious conduct. Having proteſted againſt the impoſts, and commanded his vaſſals not to pay them; the Pariſians called upon him to interpoſe for their relief. He marches with a conſiderable force towards the city, and intercepts the Dauphin, the promiſed ſpouſe of his daughter, whom the queen and the duke of Orleans were endeavouring to carry away †. The troops of both parties being aſſembled, hoſtilities were on the point of breaking forth; when, by the mediation of the other princes and courtiers, a ſuſpenſion of their animoſities and a feigned reconcilement took place. This was the prelude to other diſſenſions, which iſſued in the barbarous aſſaſſination of Lewis duke of Orleans in the ſtreets of Paris, by the contrivance of his couſin of Burgundy. A crime ſo enormous was confeſſed by the perpetrator, and attempted to be juſtified ‡ by John Petit, a doctor of the Sorbonne, who appeared as the duke of Burgundy's advocate; when, notwithſtanding his being ſullied with ſuch guilt, the city and

* Mezerai, p. 316. † Paſquier, ibid. ‡ Ibid. Henault.

univerſity

univerſity again received him as their deliverer. Several hiſtorians have quoted this horrid action and its defence, as a ſpecimen both of the violence and of the infamous caſuiſtry of the times; and it is certain, that thoſe two attributes of the character of an age generally go together. But it is proper to be obſerved, that when this ignominious juſtification of a maſſacre was heard publicly in the council, and in a manner eſpouſed by the univerſity of Paris; this great nurſery of the clergy and of literature, always a powerful body in the ſtate, had in this reign enlarged her political influence, and upon pretenſions to reform the government, eſpouſed the Burgundian faction. The univerſity not only dictated to the court upon the ſubject of the ſchiſm of the church by the antipopes; but interfered in other affairs of the ſtate *. By her intervention the Pariſians were apt to be rouſed into turbulence, or to be pacified; and it flattered her vanity to have ſuch management of the city. At this time it proved a diſgraceful province, and the many outrageous and bloody mutinies which enſued, obliged her to diſavow her being active in it. The college of the Sorbonne afterwards accuſed Petit, and he was diſclaimed as its diſciple at the council of Conſtance.

To give any further account of the civil diſtractions, in which the ſtate and kingdom of France were involved from the 1409 to the 1419, and which then had not their termination, but their cataſtrophe; belongs not to our main ſubject. After the perpetration of the murder of the duke of Orleans, and after not only his abſolution from penalty, but his being re-admitted to favour and authority at court; the duke of Burgundy purſued, and eaſily attained, the full triumph of his guilt †. But the ſhameful impu-

* De Serres, Engliſh tranſlation, p. 242. and 251. Mezerai, p. 363.

† Paſquier, ibid. Mezerai, p. 344.

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nity, and the more ſcandalous accommodation to which Charles and the government had, from weakneſs, conſented, were ſoon oppoſed and renounced by the children and friends of the family of Orleans. A juſt dread of the duke of Burgundy's ambitious purpoſes having alſo excited others of the princes to join in a league againſt him; an open war of the two factions, called by the names of the Orleanois or the Armagnacs, and the Burgundians, broke forth. Scarcely in any civil conteſt have greater inſults been committed upon public authority, order and juſtice, than what hiſtory relates of thoſe outrageous parties; which, by turns, gaining the aſcendant, borrowed the name of the king and of the ſtate to retaliate upon each other their mutual perſecutions and violences. Thus, during the infanity of Charles VI. the diſorder of the monarchical government, inſtead of creating a recurſion to the feudal principles, produced a conflict of factions, headed by the princes of the blood, and fomented by the contending grandees in the cities and among the populace. The inferior nobles and barons having loſt the knowledge of moſt of their obſolete rights, appeared to truſt to the licentiouſneſs of the times for the maintenance of the privileges they ſtill retained. Among the ſeveral orders of the nation, the taxes afforded the main ſubject of offence and outcry; and it ſeemed to be the chief effort of the ſpirit of the age to proſecute the financiers and collectors of the revenues. It was by concurring with this general humour that the duke of Burgundy ſupported his popularity, and preſerved his intereſt in the city of Paris *. As formerly in the ſtraits of government, and to appeaſe the murmurs of the people, the public vengeance was often ſuddenly vented upon the Jews and the

* Boulainvilliers, let. 8.

Lombards,

Lombards, or Italian merchants, who lent their money upon high intereſt to the kings; ſo ſtill the wiſdom and policy of the age could apply no other remedy againſt the abuſes that were practiſed in the affairs of the finances. Upon different occaſions, the farmers of the taxes at this time were fined, plundered *; and ſome of them, after being put to the torture, were executed. After the ceſſation of civil hoſtilities by the peace of Auxerre in 1413, the ſtates general were convened in order to provide for the neceſſities of the ſtate, and for the redreſs of the public grievances. But the deputies, whoſe aſſemblies had been for a long time ſuſpended, and who found them applied to only in a particular conjuncture, ſatisfied themſelves with making harangues againſt the exceſſive burdens on the people, againſt the rapine and the extortions of the managers and collectors of the impoſts, and declaring the utter incapacity of the cities and provinces in their preſent exhauſted ſtate, to furniſh the ſmalleſt ſupplies. It appears that the remonſtrances of the univerſity of Paris †, which at this time were as much or more regarded than thoſe of the ſtates, obliged the court to diſplace ſeveral of the financiers, and even to appoint ſome commiſſioners out of the body of the deputies, to promote ſome reformation of the various abuſes. But the ſituation of the government fruſtrated all ſuch projects, and encouraged the Engliſh to attempt the ſubverſion of the monarchy.

AFTER the acceſſion of Richard II. to the throne of England, animoſities had ſo far ſubſided between that kingdom and France, that the truces had ‡ not only ſeveral times been prolonged, but Iſabel, daughter to Charles VI. had been contracted in marriage

* Ibid. let. 11. Mezerai, p. 337.
† Mezerai, ibid. p. 353.
‡ Henault, p. 236. De Serres.

to

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Acceſſion of the duke of Lancaſter to the Engliſh throne.

to that monarch. His attempts to enlarge the prerogatives of the royalty, having excited a general diſſatisfaction with his adminiſtration, and Richard being compelled to reſign the crown to Henry duke of Lancaſter; a change of the public councils and meaſures followed this revolution in the royal houſe of England. Henry IV. was not however ſo quietly ſettled upon the throne as to find it convenient to undertake any conſiderable enterprize againſt France, notwithſtanding the civil broils which prevailed there appeared favourable for it. He contributed only to maintain the diviſions, and at different times had ſent ſome aſſiſtance to the two factions of the Burgundians and Orleanois; which indeed were alternately eſpouſed and proſcribed by the court. Placed in a happier ſituation of tranquillity, full of youthful ardor, and ambition to rival the martial renown of his predeceſſors, and ſupported by the concurrence of the national temper with his aſpiring views for recovering the antient dominions of the Engliſh in France, Henry V. ſoon embraced the opportunity of turning his arms againſt that kingdom. Having made his deſcent at Havre, and taken Harfleur, he endeavoured to prevent the danger his army was expoſed to from a late campaign and want of proviſions, by taking the rout to Calais *. The difficulties he had to encounter in gaining the paſſes of the rivers increaſing the ſtraits of his army, he offered terms of compoſition to the enemy, which they rejected. A peace, though a precarious one, and much to the diſſatisfaction of the duke of Burgundy, being lately agreed upon; the French monarch had ſet up, at St. Denis, the oreflamme or ſacred ſtandard, at firſt diſplayed only againſt the infidels, and afterwards againſt the Engliſh, and drawn together a great multitude of troops, to the

* Paſquier. ibid. De Serres, p. 253.

number

number of 90,000. The Engliſh were not originally above a third part of that number, and were vaſtly now reduced by ſcarcity of proviſions, and by their fatigues and diſtempers. In thoſe circumſtances of diſtreſs, the Engliſh, animated by the preſence of their brave king, were obliged to fight the battle of Agincourt, and obtained a victory no leſs honourable to their valour, and famous in their annals, than that of Creſſy or of Poictiers. Though Henry, in the ſhattered condition of his victorious troops, could form no other reſolution but to purſue his march to Calais, from whence he ſet out to reviſit his kingdom; the terror and confuſion of the blow he had ſtruck, more than the loſs ſuſtained by it, opened afreſh all the wounds which the factions had already given to the French ſtate. The public danger ſeemed to inflame the reſentment, and render more deſperate the atrocious and criminal purpoſes of the parties*. The Dauphin, Lewis, dies unregretted. John his brother, who favoured the Burgundians, is poiſoned. A mother and a queen, in hatred of her third ſon Charles, and of d'Armagnac, the conſtable, whom ſhe reckoned acceſſary to the repreſſion of her gallantry and ambition, takes part with the duke of Burgundy, whom ſhe deteſted, and aſſumed the title and power of regent of the kingdom. Henry V. upon his ſecond expedition to France, found the chief power of the ſtate divided between the queen's faction and the Dauphin's. He reckoned himſelf ſecure of the duke of Burgundy †, who had made not only a truce, but a ſecret treaty with him. Having alſo gained the duke of Britanny, taken Rouen, and conquered all Normandy, he began to count on the kingdom as his prize, or at leaſt carried his demands ſo high, that the queen and the duke of Burgundy found it neceſſary to enter

Battle of Agincourt. October 20, 1415.

* Paſquier, ibid. Henault, p. 241. † Boulainvilliers, let. 11.

PART I. into a negotiation with the Dauphin. Perfidy, party-rage and jealouſy, which had been all along predominant above all other principles of conduct, were allowed to ſhew their influence in this laſt expedient for union. While the duke of Burgundy preſented himſelf * before the Dauphin, in order to finiſh the terms of their accommodation, he was aſſaſſinated on the bridge of Montereau. A perſon, whoſe former crime was atrocious enough to have deſerved even ſuch a retaliation, was judged now, contrary to all faith and honour, to have been made a ſacrifice, not to juſtice, but to ignominious policy. An action ſo ſhocking and diſgraceful in itſelf, produced a conſequence very different from what was intended by it. It facilitated the project the queen had to get her huſband to diſpoſe of the crown along with his daughter Catherine, in favour of the victorious king of England. This was

Treaty of Troyes.

ſolemnly done by the treaty of Troyes, which † ſtipulated that Henry ſhould bear the title of heir and regent of the kingdom, in the life-time of Charles VI. and at his death inherit the royalty. At the inſtance of Philip, ſon to the duke of Burgundy, who, exaſperated with his father's murder, forgot his connexion with the blood of France, and concurred in this treaty; a bed of juſtice is held in Paris, and an arret of high treaſon againſt all that were guilty of that aſſaſſination is paſſed. Henault affirms ‡, that all the hiſtorians are miſtaken in aſſerting, that the Dauphin was called to the *marble table*, and ſentenced by this decree to a perpetual baniſhment, and excluſion from the ſucceſſion to the crown. The terms of the declaration, though they might be conſtrued to this ſenſe, he avers were general, and that the murder was imputed to

* Paſquier, ibid. De Serres, p. 270. † Henault, p. 270.

‡ Paſquier, ibid. chap. 4.

the

the Dauphin only in an ambiguous and indirect manner. Thus a fatal revolution, which placed a ſtranger prince on the throne of France, appeared to take place, while not only the parliament of Paris, but a convention of the ſtates general, ſeemed ſubmiſſive to it.

How far this ſignal revolution could have been eſtabliſhed upon a more ſolid and durable footing, if Henry V. had longer ſurvived to vanquiſh oppoſition, and carry on what he had ſo ſucceſsfully begun; is a ſubject of ſpeculation too nice and problematical for hiſtory. His early death, which was ſoon followed by that of the unhappy Charles VI. after a reign of two and forty years, made a great alteration in the fortune and pretenſions of the Engliſh, who endeavoured to maintain their acquired dominions in France, and ſupport the title of Henry VI. a child not a year old, to the inheritance of that kingdom. It may be proper to ſubjoin to the ſketch of this reign, that the * ſtatute fixing the majority of the kings was repeated in it, with this addition, that the wardſhip and tuition of them, when under fourteen, ſhould be committed to their mothers, if alive, or to the neareſt of the blood royal, aſſiſted by the chief officers of ſtate. In the proceſs of Carrouge, who charged le Gris with having diſhonoured his wife, the court of parliament ordered the duel betwixt them, which, with the cuſtomary formalities, was ſuperintended by the king and the court. Where the matter of fact, as in this caſe, was denied, and could not be proved by witneſſes, and alſo where the allegation chiefly reſpected the point of honour, this practice continued, for a long time after this period, to be admitted as part of the legal procedure.

Auguſt 30, 1422.

* Boulainvilliers, lett. 11. Henault, p. 234.

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1422.

Reign of Charles VII.

THE ſituation into which the French monarchy was now caſt was different from any former one, in which it has yet been viewed, and all the domeſtic diſputes and broils were abſorbed by a ſingular and critical contention about the future fate of the crown and the political government. A powerful enemy to the independency of both was maſter of the northern provinces of Normandy and Picardy, of the metropolis, of almoſt the whole Iſle of France, and of many towns and forts to the north of the Loire, and ſeemed capable, by the force of their victorious arms, to conſtrain the French nation to admit that transference of the ſceptre and ſovereignty which had been agreed upon in the late reign. Though the death of Henry V. was an infelicity, which might well be ſuppoſed to damp and weaken the vigour of the Engliſh in this ambitious undertaking, yet the conqueſts already made by them, the ſpirit and impulſe to ſuch warlike renown, cheriſhed by ſucceſs in that nation, together with the appearance of ſeveral gallant and diſtinguiſhed generals and ſtateſmen among them, were ſufficient encouragements to their hopes, and gave no inconſiderable aſſurances of their being able to accompliſh their purpoſe. The duke of Bedford, who by Henry's will was appointed regent of France; the earls of Saliſbury, Suffolk, Warwick and Talbot, who were the chief commanders; ſenſible that France could not be reduced by the ſole power of the Engliſh arms, joined policy to their ſtrength *, and by means of the league at Amiens, concerted a plan for the advancement of their deſign, that promiſed the higheſt ſucceſs. Beſides the duke of Burgundy, the principal confederates were the duke of Bretagne, and Arthur earl of Richmond, his brother, the duke of Savoy, and Lewis prince of Orange, who all

* De Serres, p. 276. Mezerai, p. 450.

had

had particular motives of intereſt, or reſentment, to conſpire the demolition of the French monarchy. Their union was confirmed by the marriage of one of the duke of Burgundy's ſiſters with the Engliſh regent, and of another of them with the earl of Richmond. By the combination of thoſe powerful princes with the Engliſh, the war was commenced at once through all the quarters of the kingdom, each of them with their inferior adherents, taking that ſhare of it which lay moſt convenient for them. On the other ſide, Charles VII. though young and unexperienced, and cut off from moſt conſiderable reſources of his kingdom in ſuch a time of exigency, appeared neither to ſlacken his courage nor his hope of ſucceſsfully encountering the formidable conſpiracy, by which he was threatened with being ſtripped altogether of his native dominions and of his crown. Beſides that moſt of the princes of the blood of France were attached to his intereſt, he had the aſſiſtance of ſeveral brave and gallant captains and chiefs trained to war; among which are reckoned the count de Dunois, called the Baſtard of Orleans, Tanneguy du Chaſtel, the counts de Harcourt and the chiefs de la Hire and Pothon; and though * ſome of the great cities, as well as a part of the nobility, were either variable in their allegiance, or followed the fortune of the Engliſh, it was to be preſumed that a little time, and the more favourable aſpect of his affairs, would be ſufficient to engage their affections to their natural ſovereign. Foreign ſtates alſo did not behold with indifference the attempted expulſion of Charles from his throne, and the conſequent aggrandizement of the Engliſh monarch, by the poſſeſſion of it. Scotland, which naturally ſought to ſupport itſelf by the alliance of France againſt the Engliſh power, had already

* Paſquier, ibid. De Serres, p. 274. Mezerai, p. 448.

PART I. furniſhed ſome ſupplies; and being now more encouraged by honours and dignities conferred on her military chieftains, was diſpoſed to redouble her aſſiſtance *. The Scottiſh earl of Buchan, who had defeated the duke of Clarence in the battle of Beaugée, had been created conſtable of France; and James earl of Douglas, marſhal. The dutchy of Tourain was alſo conſigned to the latter; and as a mark of particular confidence in the fidelity of the Scots, the guard for the king's perſon was compoſed of the ſoldiers of that nation; which inſtitution was for a long time after continued in France. Charles had alſo ground to expect the friendſhip and aid of the king of Caſtile and of the duke of Milan, and actually received ſome ſuccours from them. His own talents and temper, if we form our judgment of them from facts, and not from the account given of his character by the Monkiſh writers of his age †, were ſuch as fitted him to bear with the inſolences of thoſe, whoſe ſervices were neceſſary to him, as well as to ſupport the hardeſt trials of adverſity, and to win and attract by compliance, and never to diſguſt by haughtineſs or obſtinacy, and to exemplify moderation, prudence and equity in the conduct of difficult affairs, and in his acts of government.

Battles of Crevant and Verneuil.

UPON a due eſtimate of the abilities of the contending powers, there appears however to have been an evident inequality; and upon a trial, the preponderating ſtrength of the Engliſh and their allies became manifeſt. The main battles of Crevant ‡ and Verneuil were loſt by the French, beſides a number of ſmall ſkirmiſhes and ſieges, in which the Engliſh prevailed. For ſix years of the war, notwith-

* De Serres, p. 279. Mezerai, p. 409.

† Boulainvilliers, let. 11. Mezerai, p. 547. ‡ Henault, p. 244.

ſtanding

ſtanding in that time, Arthur earl of Richmond changed ſides, and the duke of Burgundy began to cool in his attachment to the Engliſh, the fortune of Charles run to the greateſt extremity. The whole provinces and cities of the kingdom to the north of the Loire, with many places in Guienne, were actually occupied or overawed by his adverſaries, who called him contemptuouſly king of Bourges, and threatened by the ſiege of Orleans, ſoon to oblige him to abandon that weak ſhelter of his royalty. The fate of the kingdom appeared in a great meaſure to depend on the reſiſtance of Orleans, and the greateſt efforts were made on both ſides to contend for the maſtery of it *. It was when that city was reduced to the utmoſt ſtraits, and conditions of ſurrender were offered by the beſieged, that the famous maid of Orleans, Joan d'Arc, appeared in the ſcene of action. Her pretenſions to a miraculous miſſion to the camp in favour of the depreſſed monarchy of France, and her extraordinary heroiſm, were calculated to reanimate the courage of the French ſoldiers, driven to extreme deſpondency by their repeated defeats and loſſes. By the raiſing of the ſiege of Orleans, the firſt turn was given to the fortune of the war; and ſeveral enſuing advantages gained by Charles's troops, proved they were capable of matching the proweſs of their enemies. Inſtead of entering into a narrative of the military exploits, which may be ſeen in all the hiſtorians, it is more conſonant to our ſubject, to obſerve that it is a political difficulty not eaſily explained, Why France, a moſt populous and warlike kingdom, from the time of Edward III. of England, not only ſuffered continually by the invaſions of that nation; but why in all the great pitched battles fought with the Engliſh, her troops were always worſted? The

* Paſquier, ibid. Henault, p. 246.

diſunion

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diſunion and civil diſſenſions prevalent in the monarchy, which have been ſurveyed, may acco nt for the formidable impreſſion which the more united ſtrength of England might often make upon that kingdom; but will not ſolve the point with reſpect to the ſuperiority of the military diſcipline of the one nation above that of the other, which muſt be allowed to have been moſt remarkable for a long period. Boulainvilliers*, who has ſtated this queſtion, endeavours to diſcuſs it in a very ingenious way, though not entirely ſatisfying. By the change of the ſervices of the crown-fiefs or feudal tenures in France, the value of which was changed into money; and by the alienations or ſales which many of the nobility made of their lands, which became the property of people unaddicted to the profeſſion of arms; he alledges that the national militia was ſo far degenerated, at leaſt in the reign of Charles VII. that it was become quite inſufficient for the defence of the kingdom. But the defect attending this reaſoning upon the point is apparent; ſince it cannot be denied but that thoſe ſame cauſes operated in England, and in other countries †, and had their effect to alter or unhinge the œconomy of the military fiefs or feus, much in the ſame manner as in France. It may be allowed, however, that in this laſt kingdom the more early and wider extent of commerce in land property, and the greater latitude allowed by the laws for the alienation of it, might create a conſiderable difference in the ſtate of its fiefs, and more than in other countries, where a ſtricter form of entails took place, contribute to the confuſion or entire ſubverſion of the ſervice of all the leſſer ones. To this conſideration, if we join this further remark, that the troops which the Engliſh kings employed in the invaſions of

* Let. 12. † Vid. Dalrymple's hiſtory of feudal property, chap. 3. ſect. 1.

France,

France, were the choiceſt bodies, and the flower of their militia, while thoſe drawn together by the French were haſty, and a promiſcuous aſſemblage of all the military vaſſals, who in the field were often diſobedient; if we add that the Engliſh placed the ſtrength of their armies in their bowmen, which were chiefly foot, while the bulk of the French forces was compoſed of the men at arms or cavalry; we have a probable conjecture, and perhaps the beſt ſolution that can be given, with reſpect to the ſurpriſing victories gained by the former over the latter, who, in their own territories, fought with many advantages on their ſide.

THE refuſal of the duke of Bedford to admit of the ſurrender of Orleans into the hands of the duke of Burgundy, to be kept by him for the duke of Orleans, then a priſoner in England, protracted the ſiege, and proved the beginning of a coldneſs and miſunderſtanding between them *, to which not only the preſervation of that town may be aſcribed, but alſo, in a great meaſure, the other defeats and misfortunes which the Engliſh met with. From the circumſtances of the Engliſh government, placed under a minority, which laid a foundation for diſagreement in their domeſtic councils, about the management of the war in France; its vigorous proſecution could not fail to be interrupted. On both ſides it was ſuffered to languiſh; and for four years few actions of importance were atchieved by either of the parties †. The coronation of Charles at Rheims was performed, and that of young Henry two years after at Paris. But it ſoon appeared that the ſlackneſs of the war turned altogether to the advantage of the French ‡. It gave time to ſet on foot thoſe negotiations which

* Henault, ibid. Mezerai, p. 464. † Henault, p. 248. ‡ Paſquier, ibid.

iſſued

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Treaty of Arras.

iſſued in the famous treaty of Arras 1435, that proved the effectual ſafety of France. In no event of that age was ſuch political conduct ſhewn. It was not only the detachment of the duke of Burgundy from the alliance with England that rendered it ſo remarkable, but the form and ſolemnity with which this important tranſaction was conducted. In the congreſs at Arras, where were aſſembled the envoys of moſt of the Chriſtian princes, together with the legates of the pope, and the deputies of the council of Braſil, the ground of quarrel between the two kings of England and France, and their reſpective pretenſions were conſidered. It was the common belief, and particularly underſtood by the Engliſh, that the plan of a general peace was to be ſettled at this conference; and it ſurprized their ambaſſadors to find, that the deliberations in it were wholly directed to extinguiſh the war in France. The offers made in Charles's name of the provinces of Guienne and Normandy to be held by the king of England on the antient footing of homage, being rejected by them; the point chiefly aimed at by the French, which was a ſeparate treaty with the duke of Burgundy, was introduced, and ſoon concluded, as he wiſhed, without any imputation on his honour for breach of faith. The ſatisfaction he required for the murder of his father, and his other demands, being agreed to; the legate abſolved him from the obligation of his oath to the Engliſh. Though Philip's alliance was bought by ſuch high conceſſions, that it can hardly be ſaid with ſome French writers, that he ſacrificed, for the ſake of the welfare of France his particular reſentments; yet he certainly gave a moſt ſignal teſtimony of this diſpoſition in the caſe of the duke of Orleans. By paying 300,000 crowns for the ranſom of this prince, the hereditary enemy of his houſe, who had been detained above twenty years in captivity, he made the moſt noble

and

and generous effort to bury in perpetual oblivion the inveterate enmities of their families. This action was ſufficient to denominate him the *good*.

THE continuation of a war ſo long waged in the bowels of France, required ſubſidies which amidſt the public confuſions could not be furniſhed. The troops in the ſervice of Charles, deſtitute of pay, ravaged the provinces under obedience to him, and ſpread terrible waſte and deſolation through the towns and villages. It was manifeſt, that while the king wanted the means to ſubſiſt them in a regular manner, this fatal miſchief, which threatened the entire ceſſation of the culture of the fields, could not be prevented *. When the deputies of the ſtates could be drawn together, as they were at Meun 1426, it appeared how the hope of relief from thoſe oppreſſions diſpoſed them to be ſubmiſſive to the demands of the king, by their granting him a general taille. Under the feudal ſyſtem this tax had been paid by the tradeſmen and roturiers to their lords, for the defence afforded them †. It was afterwards exacted in times of war by the kings, and levied on the third eſtate or common people, and now the grant of it to them, which was rendered perpetual, appeared to confirm their poſſeſſion of the ſole right of the ſword, or of the national defence. Exemption from it alſo became in the kingdom the diſtinctive badge of nobility. In this manner the war with the Engliſh, by cutting ſhort the long maintained diſputes about the taxes, contributed to ſtrengthen the monarchical authority in the kingdom. Charles's management of the revenues was ſuch as procured him the goodwill and confidence of the people. His frequent application to the

A general taille granted by the ſtates.

* Henault, p. 251. Boulainvilliers, ibid. † Paſquier, liv. ii. chap. 7.

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ſtates for their advice, and his reference of all important and arduous affairs of ſtate to their determination, facilitated to him the execution of ſeveral difficult ſchemes, for extricating the kingdom from the diſorders with which it was oppreſſed. After having recovered poſſeſſion of his capital city, and conſiderably reſtrained the power of the Engliſh; he, with the approbation of the ſtates, met at Orleans, made new overtures of peace, which occaſioned only * a ſhort truce. But he took this opportunity to concert with the deputies his plan for relieving the provinces from the depredations of the army. No meaſure was more requiſite and laudable, while in the circumſtances of the government it ſeemed to be a very hazardous one. Charles, however, made the attempt, and was at laſt ſucceſsful in it †. He reduced the gendarmery into diſtinct companies, and appointed their captains, limited the number of their attendants; and having provided in ſome degree for their maintenance, he obliged them to quit all thoſe countries, where their ſervice was not neceſſary, and to march into the frontier provinces bordering on the enemy.

Origin of the gendarmery.

BY means of the reformation which Charles made in the army, he improved its uſefulneſs in the field, and was enabled to carry on his military operations in a much more expeditious and regular manner, than had been done in the former courſe of the war. Of this a proof was given in a very dangerous and embarraſſing emergency ‡, when a number of the great lords entered into a conſpiracy for controuling the king's authority, and obliging him to accommodate his rules of government to their partial and intereſted views. It ſeems they were apprehenſive that the king, who now

* Mezerai, p. 498. † Paſquier, liv. ii. chap. 16.

‡ Boulainvilliers. Mezerai. De Serres, ibid.

had

had put his army on a footing, which gave him the more abſolute command of it, would be ready to forget their paſt ſervices. They drew over to their party ſuch captains and chiefs of the troops as preferred freebooting to the ſtricter eſtabliſhment of the army. But their main confidence was placed in having it in their power to ſeduce Lewis the Dauphin, from his duty and allegiance to the king his father. This prince, who at ſeventeen years of age was married to Margaret, daughter to James I. of Scotland, ſhewed a petulant and intractable temper, which could be eaſily inſtigated to diſobedience and revolt. From the ſuſpicions Charles had of his genius; being kept at a diſtance from the court, he was eaſily perſuaded to become the head of the inſurrection. Immediately ſeveral towns were ſeized by the conſpirators, and Charles's affairs ſeemed to wear a cloudy aſpect. But that vigilant monarch quickly ſhewed what he could now perform in ſuch an extremity. Without leaving the frontier garriſons unfurniſhed, or allowing the Engliſh to take advantage of the commotion, he marched with eight hundred men at arms, and two thouſand archers againſt the inſurgents. The expedition of his troops was ſuch, that they allowed no time to their antagoniſts to fortify themſelves in any place, and purſued them from one province to another with more celerity than the others fled before them. The chiefs were obliged to make their ſubmiſſion; and the whole event, which was called the *praguerie*, paſſed with little prejudice to the public intereſt. After the death of the duke of Bedford, the affairs of the Engliſh had not been managed to advantage. Though Richard duke of York, who ſucceeded him in his command, and in the title of regent in France, had brought conſiderable reinforcements, and braved Charles at Pontoiſe; yet he could not hinder the reduction of that place, nor prevent Dieppe from being relieved. Charles,

PART I. capable to maintain the war in various quarters, extended it towards Guienne, and atchieved ſeveral important conqueſts, and made different proviſions for ſecuring the peace of the ſouthern provinces. But the Engliſh power and valour being ſtill exerted with ſucceſs in ſeveral enterprizes; thoſe advantages were in ſome meaſure counterbalanced by ſeveral defeats given to the French, till the two nations, deſirous of a reſpite in the 1444, agreed upon a truce of eighteen months. It was then that the marriage of the king of England to Margaret of Anjou, daughter of Rene, titular king of Sicily, was negotiated by the duke of Suffolk; in conſequence of which alliance, the truce was prolonged, and peace continued for four years.

EMBRACING the opportunity of the peace, Charles VII. ſhewed that wiſe policy and due conſideration of the public welfare, which rendered him worthy of the name of the reſtorer of the kingdom. An army which he had reformed in a good meaſure, and ſtrove to ſubject to diſcipline, but the licenced and habitual irregularities of which he knew to be incorrigible; an army, which he might have attached to himſelf, by permitting the continuance of its depredations on the kingdom, he now determined to diſband. To facilitate the execution of this deſign, a particular ſcheme was formed by him *. A war on frivolous pretences was denounced againſt the Swiſs, the count of Montbeliard, and the city of Metz; and the army, eagerly attracted with the hopes of plunder, was conducted by the Dauphin to the frontiers of the empire. The Engliſh concurring in this expedition, Charles hoped to rid his realms of their banditti, as well as of his own. They met with

* De Serres, p. 331. Boulainvilliers, ibid.

no

no enemy that dared oppoſe them, but four thouſand Swiſs from the town of Baſil, who, with a fortitude rarely found in the annals of any nation, marched out to the combat; and amidſt twice their own number of foes that were ſlain, fell all of them, except a few, who were ſentenced at home to be ſhot as deſerters. Having ravaged Alſace and taken a ranſom from Metz, the army, loaded with booty, was brought to a rendezvous at Nancy in Lorain, where Charles, after a diſtribution of pay, gave the troops their diſmiſſion *. Fifteen companies of 100 men each of the gendarmery, and 4000 archers choſen out of the whole of them were only retained. It was after this remarkable tranſaction that Charles regulated the equipage of this ſtanding body of militia †, and inſtead of a ſubſiſtence they had from the cities, got the taille fixed for their ſtated maintainance. A famous ordinance with reſpect to the Frank archers was alſo publiſhed. Every pariſh was appointed to furniſh one of thoſe ſoldiers, who were called by that name from the infranchiſements granted them, and their being exempted from all taxes and public impoſts. They were deſigned to compoſe a body of foot, and part of them to ſerve occaſionally as light cavalry. All this was the more eaſily effectuated by Charles, as the nobles, before this time, had deſired to be freed from the burden of military ſervice.

Eſtabliſhment of the gendarmery.

THE police of the kingdom, the military eſtabliſhment, and the revenues of the crown, having undergone a change ſo advantageous to the authority of the king, and conducive to the defenſive ſtrength of the monarchy; the dominion of the Engliſh in France could not, without a greater effort of power than that nation, under

* Paſquier, ibid. † Le Gendre, tom. i. p. 52. Mezerai, p. 511.

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ſo weak a ſovereign as Henry VI. was capable of exerting, be longer maintained on its former footing. The ſurprize and pillage of Fougeres, a ſmall town in Brittany, by a partizan of the Engliſh, having produced a quarrel which could not be compromiſed, hoſtilities were renewed between the two nations. Charles, ſenſible of his ſuperiority, and acquainted with the diſſentions which then began to be excited in England by Richard duke of York, determined to puſh on the war with vigour, and attempt the entire expulſion of the Engliſh from all their poſſeſſions in the kingdom *. He immediately doubled the fifteen companies of gendarmery, which having their uſual compliments of attendants upon each man at arms, conſiſting of a ſquire or page, a ſervant, two archers and a couſtelier, muſt be reckoned by this augmentation to have amounted to eighteen thouſand horſemen. With ſuch a body of troops regularly ſubſiſted, and under due diſcipline, Charles found it not difficult to accompliſh his aim. The Engliſh garriſons, unprovided with the ſtores of war, oppreſſive to many of the towns on account of their exactions, and generally odious as foreigners, were incapable of holding out againſt regular ſieges.

The reduction of Normandy and Guienne.

The greateſt part of Normandy was ſoon reduced, and in ſpite of the efforts of the duke of Somerſet and Talbot, who with three thouſand Engliſh troops defended Rouen, the inſurrection of the citizens forced them to a ſudden capitulation. By the battle of Fourmigny fought in that province, it appeared that the French troops had ſo much improved in the military ſcience, that they could no longer be outdone, as formerly they had been, by the ſuperior luſtre of the Engliſh arms. It was in this action † that many of the chiefs and officers of the Engliſh, grown hoary in the wars of France,

* Boulainvilliers, ibid. Henault, p. 251. † De Serres, p. 340.

and whoſe names had been long heard with terror in that kingdom, were taken priſoners. After the conqueſt of Normandy, that of Guienne being undertaken by Charles and his generals, the towns were obliged to yield, and the Engliſh in a ſhort time were every where overcome. Thoſe ſignal loſſes and diſhonours to the Engliſh crown and nation, as they were then vainly deemed, tended to heighten the factions that began to prevail in that court and ſtate, while they endeavoured to load each other with the blame of them *. To the hopeleſs and deſperate taſk of recovering thoſe loſt conqueſts, the aged and valiant Talbot is once more appointed. Renowned for almoſt forty years ſervice in France, his name proved ſufficient to make Bourdeaux throw open her gates, and ſeveral other places of Guienne, to imitate her example of revolt. But having engaged in a battle near Cliſſon, which was beſieged by the French, this veteran warrior and his ſon were ſlain; and with him periſhed all the hopes of the Engliſh to re-eſtabliſh their power in France. Calais was the only town which they were able to hold in their poſſeſſion.

We attempt not to give a ſummary of the laſt years of this reign, in which a monarch who had delivered France from a foreign yoke, and who having in a manner conquered his kingdom, choſe to govern it upon ſuch political principles as were moſt conſiſtent with the public ſafety and welfare, and found himſelf unfortunate in a ſon, as he had been in a father. Leſs capable to endure and ſurmount this domeſtic trouble, than the many ſignal hardſhips and perils with which he had been invironed; he contracted from too much ſenſibility a diſguſt of life. The harſh judgment pro-

* Paſquier, liv. vi. chap. iv.

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nounced by ſome hiſtorians upon this infelicity, from human weakneſs incident to the nobleſt minds, diſcovers no leſs a want of reflexion and delicacy, than the repreſentation of him by others, as being only a ſpectator of the great atchievements of his reign, appears to be inconſiſtent with all probability and truth.

SECT. V.

Reign of Lewis XI.—*His peculiar character and genius in government*—*League of the* Commonwealth—*Battle of Mont-le-heri*—*Lewis's conteſts with Francis duke of Bretagne, and Charles of Burgundy*—*Treaty of Amiens with Edward* IV. *of England, and that of Arras with the archduke of Auſtria*—*Reign of Charles* VIII.—*Acquiſition of Bretagne*—*Expedition into Italy*—*Reign of Lewis* XII.—*Conſtitution of the French ſtate in the reigns of Francis* I. *and Henry* II.

1461. Reign of Lewis XI.

IT muſt be allowed that hiſtorians, who account for the general train of public events and actions from the particular character of the prince, find in the reign of Lewis XI. more than in any others we have yet traced, a proper foundation for their political theory. It is apparent that this prince, in his acts of adminiſtration, accommodated himſelf to the circumſtances of the ſtate, and ſhewed leſs conſideration of what the nation he ruled might be ſuppoſed to bear from him, than Charlemagne, Hugh Capet, or any of the preceding founders of the monarchy *. By this characteriſtic of Lewis's government, we are not ſo much to underſtand his particular bent to the exerciſe of tyrannical ſeverities and cruelty, with which he is alſo impeached; as his luſt of deſpotic power, his arbitrary maxims and procedure, his high conceit and jealouſy of his prerogative, his caprice and vanity, oddly mixed with craft and ſuſpicion; and all that ſurpriſing medley of judgment, quickneſs of underſtanding, and great natural talents for govern-

* Henault, p. 267. Memoires de Comines, liv. i. quart. edit. Bruxelles, chap. 10.

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ment, contraſted by ſome contrary qualities, which conſtituted the ſingular character of this prince, and diſpoſed him to exalt the intereſt and honour of the monarch above thoſe of the ſtate, and render his adminiſtration a remarkable inſtance of the ſtruggle of the royalty, to be freed from what limited ſovereigns are apt to reckon its unneceſſary fetters and conſtraints *. His reign therefore may be conſidered as a new æra, in which a more direct experiment, with reſpect to the vigour and influence of the ſovereign power in the kingdom, is made, after its ſlow and gradual progreſs towards maturity. As it falls not within the compaſs of our ſketch of the political revolutions of the French monarchy to enter into the detail of the various ſchemes, intrigues and enterprizes, meditated and purſued by this ambitious and inceſſantly active monarch, we ſhall conſider chiefly what particular advantages from the circumſtances of the kingdom, both foreign and domeſtic, Lewis XI. poſſeſſed, to enable him to augment the royal prerogative, and enlarge the dominions of his kingdom; and after running ſome hard riſques of fortune, render himſelf, by the ſucceſsful influence of his policy, not only ſuperior to his enemies at home and abroad, but one of the moſt formidable and powerful princes of his time.

THE expulſion of the Engliſh by Charles VII. and the many wiſe regulations, military and civil, eſtabliſhed by that monarch, had placed France in a ſituation more favourable for the advancement of the dignity of the crown, and of the national power, than the kingdom had known for more than a century paſt. Public tranquillity and ſafety, ſucceeding to the precarious truces with the Engliſh, and the lawleſs excurſions and ravages of the banditti;

* Mezerai, p. 552. Boulainvilliers, let. 13.

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the ſeveral orders of the French nation had reaſon to ſee their defence placed in the maintainance and elevation of the royalty. Among the generality of the nobleſſe, the antient principles of the feudal anarchy were obliterated, and the public authority of the king and the ſtate not only recognized, but ſupported by the influence of the legal inſtitutions and ordinances, which had obtained gradually the aſcendant over the feudal cuſtoms; and alſo by ſome conformity of the manners to the alterations of the political government. What remained of the feudal independence was chiefly to be found among ſuch princes of the blood as were poſſeſſed of large appenages. By the eſtabliſhment of the taille in the late reign upon a regular footing, the violent oppoſition made to the public taxes had abated, and the people of all ranks became more accuſtomed to ſupply, by ſtated contributions, the exigencies of the government *. It is evident, notwithſtanding all the diſorders of the kingdom by the Engliſh war, that the natural advantages of France, enjoyed by commerce, had produced a gradual increaſe of her metallic riches or ſpecie, and that this augmentation would go on, when Charles VII. inſtead of tampering with the coin, reduced it to a proper ſtandard. It appears that this prince had procured by the tailles one million two hundred thouſand livres a year, which, compared with what had been furniſhed in the preceding reigns, was a large revenue †. By the advancement of the national wealth, Lewis XI. was enabled to raiſe no leſs than four millions, ſeven hundred thouſand livres annually, and to make his finances one of his main political reſources. Such were the domeſtic advantages poſſeſſed by this prince, which might facilitate the advancement of the royal power and dignity in his

Advancement of the crown revenues.

* Boulainvilliers, let. 12. † De Comines, liv. v. chap. 18. ibid. liv. vii. chap. 10.

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reign. With reſpect to foreign ſtates, his political ſituation may be reckoned to have been no leſs favourable. Though the dethroning of Henry VI. of England by Edward duke of York, appeared an undeſirable event to the French monarch, who might apprehend more diſturbance from the enterprizing ſpirit of the new ſucceſſor to the Engliſh crown than from Henry, who had ſhewn himſelf weak and unactive; yet the ſource opened by this revolution for the continuance of the inteſtine broils in that kingdom, more than balanced this advantage, which was only an apparent one *. From the quarrels ſubſiſting between the kings of Caſtile and Arragon, Lewis XI. in the beginning of his reign, found his mediation courted by both; and the latter of thoſe princes was obliged to engage to him the counties of Cerdaigne and Rouſſillon for the repayment of three hundred thouſand crowns of gold he had borrowed. The duke of Savoy was connected with him as his brother-in-law, and he had cultivated a particular alliance with Francis Sforza duke of Milan, whom he made his vaſſal by the gift of Savona. The houſe of Bretagne was too weak to give him cauſe of fear or jealouſy; and though that of Burgundy was very rich and powerful, the protection and friendſhip which Lewis had experienced during ſix years of his exilement, from duke Philip, appeared to afford a pledge of their future amicable correſpondence †. That prince, as the completion of his good offices to Lewis, had conducted him to his coronation at Rheims with four thouſand pick'd horſemen. He did public homage to him after the ceremony, and then on his knees only made this requeſt to him, that for his own peace and glory, he would pardon thoſe who had given him diſpleaſure or offence in his father's reign.

* Henault, p. 256. † De Serres, p. 354.

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IT is evident that Lewis XI. entertained ideas of his royal power, which exceeded the higheſt eſtimate that could be made of the advantageous circumſtances in which he aſſumed it. Preſuming that he might not only rule the ſtate, but at once change the whole meaſures of government according to his pleaſure, he ſeemed to make it his firſt maxim to act in contradiction to the model of his father's adminiſtration. Many of the principal officers, both civil and military, whoſe ſervices had recommended them in the late reign, were quickly diſplaced by him; and he ſcrupled not to attempt a conſiderable alteration in the eccleſiaſtical eſtabliſhment *. Hurried by the ſame innate propenſity to act the deſpotic monarch, and exert the plenitude of his power, he publiſhed two declarations, one againſt giving aſſiſtance to Edward of England, and another for an impoſt on ſalt in the territories of the duke of Burgundy, which, joined to ſome other previous diſobligations, made Philip at length give way to the inſtigations of the count de Charolois his ſon, who, diſguſted with Lewis as he was hated by that prince, was diſpoſed to guard againſt him as a crafty adverſary †. Though Lewis had ſo far rendered his conduct ſuſpicious, that it was believed that Rubempré ſent by him into Holland, had ſecret inſtructions, not only to ſeize Romille, an agent of the count's, but to carry off the heir of Burgundy himſelf by ſurprize, he ſtill proceeded without much apprehenſion in his original ſcheme to attack the duke of Brittanny, whom he had ſingled out as the weakeſt of the two great vaſſals of the crown, and hoped to overwhelm before he could be aſſiſted. Having redeemed the towns on the river Somme and in Picardy, which had been pledged to the duke of Burgundy ever ſince the treaty of Arras, for four

Changes in the principal offices of government.

* De Serres, p. 356. Mezerai, p. 562. † De Comines, liv. i. chap. 1.

hundred thouſand crowns, and having changed the officers in all thoſe garriſons, and ſtrengthened them with additional troops; the blow he meditated appeared to be irreſiſtible *. But while Lewis thought himſelf ſecure of executing his project with ſucceſs, the conſpiracy and revolt of the greateſt part of the princes of the blood, joined with many of the grandees of the ſtate, and the old military commanders, diſcovered how dangerous in the firſt eſſay of it, that artful policy was likely to prove, by which that monarch ſought to eſtabliſh his grandeur. Upon this combination was formed the league, called that of the *commonwealth* or of the public good. The duke of Bretagne and the count de Charolois, who only waited an opportunity of revenge, became principal parties in it; and by their addreſs and dexterity, Charles duke of Berry, the king's only brother, and the preſumptive heir of the crown, was gained over to ſupport their cauſe, with the ſpecious patronage of his name.

League of the commonwealth.

We may juſtly reckon that Lewis XI. had attempted to ſtrain both his policy as a king, and his authority as a ſovereign, when, in the fourth year of his reign, ſo formidable a confederacy was raiſed againſt him. His vacating the offices and poſts of the crown, and ſuperſeding thoſe who had acquired them in the late reign, without any reſpect to their figure and importance in the ſtate, was an arbitrary and capricious meaſure, which could not fail to alienate the minds of many, and excite diſaffection to his government among ſuch as were not inclined to diſloyalty. Even upon the ſuppoſition that the princes of the blood, and the principal chieftains of the militia, and the counſellors of the parliament had pretended to

* Mezerai, p. 567. Boulainvilliers, let. 13.

retain

retain their offices by right of poſſeſſion, the political ſituation of the monarchy required that the king ſhould make ſome allowance for this prejudice. The face of public affairs was now much altered from what it had been in the firſt periods of the late reign. The main obſtacles to the exerciſe of the royal power being removed, the continuation of the lords and nobles in their employments, inſtead of being a dangerous meaſure, became a prudent and proper one, in order to confirm their allegiance and attachment to the government. A judicious * author, whoſe memoirs have furniſhed the beſt materials for the hiſtory of the reign of Lewis XI. obſerves, that the various offices of the French ſtate being eſtimated beyond their lucrative value, were now become attractive objects, after which the generality of people with great emulation aſpired. From not conſidering how the monarchical power needed to be cheriſhed in its growth, by permitting thoſe natural bands of honour and intereſt to operate with ſuitable force, Lewis obſtructed his own deſigns, and expoſed his crown and dignity to imminent danger. The eagerneſs of his ambition prompting him to avow his purpoſes of hoſtility againſt the duke of Bretagne, while he reckoned too much on his ability to impoſe on the facility of the aged and peaceable duke of Burgundy; he gave occaſion to thoſe two houſes to unite againſt him, and reinforce the diſcontented princes and nobles of the kingdom with their powerful aid. The conſequence was correſpondent to ſuch unwary and precipitant meaſures †. Notwithſtanding ſome appearances of ſucceſs in ſuppreſſing the inſurrection of the nobles, no exertion of his power and vigilance could prevent the duke of Charolois from advancing into the Iſle of France, with an army of fourteen hundred men at

* De Comines, liv. i. chap. 6.

† Ibid. liv. i. chap. 2.

arms,

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arms, and nine thouſand archers, and taking his poſt near the capital. While Lewis marched from the Bourbonois with expedition to protect Paris, he was obliged, by an unexpected rencounter with the enemy to fight the battle of Mont-le-heri. Though in this engagement, intended by neither of the parties, and which, in reſpect of the military proweſs of their troops, did honour to none of them; the victory was diſputable: yet from the effect it had to fluſh the duke of Burgundy with hopes of acquiring renown, and to animate his confederates to join him, Lewis became immediately the greateſt ſufferer. The army of the aſſociates of the league daily increaſing, the capital, which was the king's only refuge, was invironed by * near a hundred thouſand of their militia. If their conduct had equalled their ſtrength, the city muſt have yielded to their aſſaults, or been reduced by famine. But though ſlack in their military operations, which were often ſuſpended by the diverſity of their counſels, and changed into propoſals of capitulation and intrigues with the citizens, they were on the point of accompliſhing their purpoſe. Lewis, who had gone to Normandy to provide for its defence, and to raiſe ſome troops, came in the critical hour to preſerve his capital. The Pariſians, among whom the ſpecious arguments about the reformation of the ſtate began to work their wonted effect, had agreed that the princes and chief lords in parties, and with a certain number of their attendants might enter the city. In extricating himſelf from this perillous ſituation, Lewis ſhewed ſome degree of intrepidity and firm reſolution, and yet more conſideration and judgment. When he found, beſides the riſque he run by the ſiege of Paris, that his adverſaries had become maſters of the city of Rouen, he determined to conclude

Battle of Mont-le-heri.

July, 1465.

* De Comines, liv. i. chap. 6.

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the treaty of Conflans, about which he had hesitated; and granted them all their requisitions. The dutchy of Normandy was assigned to his brother the duke of Berry as his appenage, the modification and appointment of which had been made one of the chief pretensions for the civil war *. The towns upon the Somme, with the redemption of which the count de Charolois had been extremely discontented, were restored to him. To gratify him more, the count de St. Pol was invested by Lewis with the office of constable of France, which was the most eminent one under the crown. The duke of Bretagne obtained, besides a sum of money, the confirmation of the sovereign rights the king had disputed with him. Other gratifications by pensions and employments were allowed to the chief partizans of the princes, while the consideration of the public interest was referred to a future discussion by commissioners that were to be nominated out of the three orders of the kingdom.

To be obliged to agree to such a capitulation as Lewis now made, was not so unfortunate and pernicious an event as upon the first glance of it may be supposed. It rather, in some respect, shewed the superiority of the king over such a powerful combination against him, when he could dissipate it by means of grants and largesses, which a proper opportunity and a different conjuncture of affairs might enable him to resume. From the baits that satisfied the partizans it appeared, that they were engaged by no proper tie of a common interest to unite in opposing him; or, at least, that the bond of union among the chief princes was precarious †. It is observed, that the distribution of the posts and offices among the nobility, was made in a manner by Lewis, that

* Ibid. chap. 12. Boulainvilliers, let. 13. † Mezerai, p. 575.

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tended to create mutual jealouſy and diſcord; and he had the ſatiſfaction to ſee, even ſooner than could be hoped for by him, a quarrel ariſe between ſome of the principal chiefs about that conceſſion, which was moſt grievous to him, the eſtabliſhment of the new duke of Normandy. From the humour the people of that province ſhewed to be governed by a duke of their own, and the hazard of its being diſmembered from the crown as an heretable appenage, he had juſt ground to be apprehenſive. Anxious and eager after an opportunity to retract the undeſirable donation to his brother, he laid hold on the incident of the diviſion * that happened with the later and the duke of Britanny, to march into Normandy; and, in few weeks, wreſted the whole of that province, except ſome particular places, out of the hands of both thoſe princes. This was an inſtance of that ſignal genius for turning emergencies and conjunctures to his advantage, by which Lewis diſtinguiſhed his whole reign. Few princes excelled him in this politic talent; and though, upon his firſt acceſſion to the throne, he ſeemed to be wilful and head-long in his ambition; he ſoon learned to adapt his conduct to the ſituation of his affairs, and to carry on his deſign in a more artful manner †. It is obſerved, that to gain the people of Paris, he publiſhed an ordinance, which reduced or aboliſhed all the impoſts except thoſe of the five great farms of the crown. He even conſented to the popular expedient of forming a council of eighteen perſons, taken from the body of the parliament, from the univerſity and from the burgeſſes of Paris ‡. After having at firſt raiſed great ſums by vacating the offices, ſenſible what odium and prejudice had reſulted from this meaſure, he iſſued a declaration, importing, that no public poſt or employ-

* Henault, p.258. † Mezerai, p. 572. ‡ Henault, p. 260. Boulainvilliers, ib.

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ment ſhould be for the future beſtowed by him, unleſs it became vacant by death, voluntary reſignation or forfeiture. This was afterwards conſidered in ſome meaſure as one of the general rules or uſages of the monarchy.

WHEN Lewis XI. retained the city of Paris in obedience to him, and found it his fortreſs in the midſt of the general revolt of the grandees, it is manifeſt that there was a conſiderable change in the principles and temper of the nation. In the late reigns, the metropolis and other cities following her example, had commonly led the way to inſurrections, by complaints againſt the impoſts, or by ſome turbulent requiſitions for reforming the government. From the enjoyment of peace and the increaſe of trade and wealth, this unruly ſpirit had ſubſided among the citizens and common people, or at leaſt was become ſo tractable, that the promiſes which Lewis made and the flatteries he uſed were ſufficient to obviate the eruptions of it. It was the maxim of this monarch, who knew from what ſide the chief preſſure againſt the royalty aroſe, to court the cities and win their attachment to him, in order by their aid to humble the grandees, whoſe jealouſy and diſlike of him were apparent *. Of this conduct, beſides the inſtances already obſerved, his appointment for incorporating the whole inhabitants of Paris fit to bear arms, into regular companies with captains and officers to command them, was a proof. It is obſerved, that on the firſt review of the city militia, their number amounted to eighty thouſand, when reckoned from ſixteen years of age to ſixty. Lewis derived a great advantage from the regular bodies of the gendarmes and of the Frank-archers eſtabliſhed by Charles VII. though he

Number of the militia of Paris.

* Mezerai, p. 586.

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afterwards thought fit to lay aſide the latter. He found it always eaſy to raiſe a conſiderable army for ſurpriſing his opponents unprepared. At this time he forced the duke of Britanny and his brother the duke of Berry, who had agreed their differences, and meditated a new revolt, to come to terms of ſubmiſſion, and to refer the grand point of the appenage of the latter to the deciſion of the ſtates general *. It appears that, at different junctures, he had called two aſſemblies of the notables or principal nobility and officers of ſtate, in order to calm the diſcontents of the kingdom. But this only convention of the ſtates aſſembled by him at Tours 1468, may be conſidered as a maſter-piece of Lewis's policy. Such a plauſible ſcheme for terminating by the public judgment of the nation, the controverſy with his brother, ſo well contrived, and conducted with the greateſt dexterity, ſhewed that, when he deſigned it, he knew how to accompliſh his ends by the moſt proper means. By his attention to gain a majority of the deputies to concur with his views, by his obliging them to hurry over their deliberations, and bring their meeting to a quick concluſion, while he diſcovered his apprehenſion and jealouſy of thoſe popular aſſemblies, he may be reckoned at the ſame time to have ſet an example in what manner their dreaded oppoſition to the royalty might be baffled by the policy of the ſovereigns. The deputies, as obſequious to his intentions as Lewis wiſhed them to be, pronounced that Normandy, the key of the kingdom on the ſide where it was expoſed to the invaſions of England, ought not to be detached from the crown; that the treaty of Conflans, which had ſtipulated the gift of this appenage to the duke of Berry, being the effect of a revolt and public diſorder, could not conſtitute a proper obligation; that his brother

Aſſembly of the ſtates at Tours.

* Henault, p. 260. Boulainvilliers, ibid.

ſhould

ſhould be ſatisfied with an aſſignment of twelve thouſand livres a a year in land property; and ſixty thouſand of a pecuniary penſion, even without this liberality being deemed a precedent for other ſons of France; and that the duke of Britanny ſhould be directly compelled by force to reſtore the places held in Normandy. Lewis, who had an army prepared to inforce the execution of his deciſion, ſoon obliged the two dukes to acquieſce in it *. But he found it neceſſary to diſburſe a hundred and twenty thouſand crowns to engage the count de Charolois to diſarm; who now become duke of Burgundy by the death of his father, and returning from chaſtiſing the inſurrections of the cities of Liege and Ghent, had moved with his army towards the borders of the kingdom to ſupport the dukes in their reſiſtance.

Lewis's conteſt with the dukes of Burgundy and Bretagne.

If Lewis XI. ſhewed himſelf political and crafty in his conduct, it is certain that he was engaged with opponents that found him conſtant employment for his ſubtile genius. Francis duke of Bretagne had the circumſpection and vigilance of an adverſary ſenſible of his inferiority, and attentive to ſupply his want of ſtrength by addreſs. Lewis of Luxembourg count de St. Pol, and conſtable of France, incited by intereſt, and his particular ſituation, to be the conſtant inſtigator of diſcord among thoſe princes with whom he was connected, had abilities that enabled him for a long time to purſue this ſcheme †, for maintaining his independence and his emoluments with ſucceſs. In the time of war, by his office of conſtable, he was allowed pay for four hundred men at arms, ſuppoſed to be retained by him for the king's ſervice; and thirty thouſand Franks, beſides the wages and other perquiſites that belonged

* De Comines, liv. 2. chap. 5. † Ibid. liv. iii. chap. 1. Paſquier, liv. vi. chap. 10.

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to his high poſt. His character was made up of diſſimulation and perfidy. * Charles duke of Burgundy, called the Hardy, from pride in the opulence of his houſe, and the homage of ſeveral of the moſt populous cities of that age, more than from natural capacity, having commenced a warrior, and fought the battle of Montleheri, never ceaſed from action or ſome ſcheme of military enterprize. With the qualities of a ſoldier rather than thoſe of a commander; oſtentatious of his ſtrength more than judicious in the exerciſe of it; indefatigable with too little ſkill; ambitious of great conqueſts without a plan; he was always diſpoſed, and generally able to take the field againſt Lewis, who choſe not to hazard too far the chances of war. By the frequent concurrence of thoſe princes to thwart his deſigns, the monarch was often embroiled, and hindered eſpecially from bringing the affair of the duke of Berry's appenage to the concluſion he deſired. Having often various projects in embrio at the ſame time, and being naturally apt from confidence in his own abilities, to think he could ſurprize or over-reach thoſe with whom he had to do; Lewis was ſometimes entangled in the labyrinth of his policy †. What happened to him at Peronne, when he went to hold a conference with the duke of Burgundy for confirming the peace, while at the ſame time he was diſcovered to have ſtirred up the people of Liege to rebel againſt the duke, was a notable example of this. To extricate himſelf from the danger of impriſonment, or a worſe fate, it coſt him a diſgraceful attendance on the duke's expedition, largeſſes to his minions, and a treaty that undid a great part of his former labours. If that article of the treaty by which Champagne and Brie were allowed to the duke of Berry for his portion, had been fulfilled, the confe-

* De Comines, liv. i. chap. 4. † Henault, ibid. De Comines, liv. ii.

deracy

deracy of the princes would have been rendered doubly formidable to the king. But his brother's want of capacity, and his own dexterity in intrigue, diverted this conſequence. The duke of Berry's favourite counſellor being gained, he was perſuaded to accept of Guienne in place of the other provinces contiguous to Burgundy. Even by that conceſſion the princes were enabled to perſiſt in a courſe of ſtrife and hoſtile enterprizes, mixed with circumvention and perfidy; in which, jealous of one another as well as of Lewis, and exciting contention with a view to their particular intereſts, they proved themſelves rivals of his treacherous policy, as well as adverſaries of his grandeur.

We paſs over ſeveral of thoſe unintereſting conteſts and immaterial events, to obſerve, that the death of the duke of Berry by poiſon, the extravagant projects of the duke of Burgundy, and the weakneſs of the king of England, delivered Lewis from the chief embarraſments under which he laboured, and paved the way to his attainment of more abſolute dominion in his kingdom, and the enlargement of his empire *. Having, in ſpite of ſome deſigned inſurrection, ſecured Guienne, and obliged the duke of Burgundy to quit the invaſion of Picardy, and pacified the duke of Bretagne, he concluded the truce of Bouvines with the former, who having received the ſucceſſion of the dutchy of Gueldres, began to form the ſcheme of erecting his eſtates into a kingdom. Charles of Burgundy had it then in his power to have rendered himſelf one of the moſt potent princes of his time. His dominions in a flouriſhing condition †, his troops numerous, well trained, and in the beſt array; his alliance was ſought, and the match with his

* De Serres, p. 381. Henault.

† De Comines, liv. iv. chap. 1.

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daughter, the heireſs of Burgundy, courted by the chief princes of Europe. He had ſtrengthened himſelf by a league offenſive and defenſive with the king of England, to which the duke of Bretagne had engaged to accede. In conſequence of this treaty, Edward IV. had prepared to paſs the ſea with a great army. The revolutions of the Engliſh monarchy, after the acceſſion of that monarch, had proved very ſurprizing, and the ſuperiority of the red or of the white roſe was thrown on the chances of ſeveral battles; which being for an inſtant of time deciſive, had alternately reſtored to the throne and driven from it the two houſes of Lancaſter and York*. By the famed earl of Warwick, Edward had been defeated and taken priſoner, had eſcaped and recovered his fortune; was again worſted by Warwick, who received ſome aſſiſtance from Lewis XI. and obliged to fly into the territories of the duke of Burgundy, his brother-in-law. Aſſiſted by him with a ſmall ſuccour of men, ſome ſhips and money, Edward landed in England, defeats and kills in battle Warwick and his brother; and having afterwards vanquiſhed Henry's queen, Margaret, and the prince of Wales his ſon, in another action, he was reinſtated in the throne by a rotation of fortune, as rapid as that which had twice diſpoſſeſſed him of it. Having ſeveral incitements to a war with France, and expecting the duke of Burgundy would be ready to join his forces with him; and, by † means of his correſpondence with the conſtable, facilitate the invaſion of the frontiers; Edward landed at Calais, but found that the former of thoſe princes had engaged in the ſiege of Nuitz upon the Rhine, and by his perſiſting obſtinately in it for a long time, notwithſtanding the loſs of men he ſuſtained, had weakened his army, and could not immediately proceed to action. In this

Various revolutions in the Engliſh monarchy.

* De Serres. Mezerai, p. 609. † Ibid. p. 623.

conjuncture,

conjuncture, which was a very critical one, Lewis's policy was exerted to the outmoſt *. To his intrigues, as well as to the ill concerted and vain projects of Charles of Burgundy it was owing, that a league had been already formed againſt the latter, by the imperial cities of Germany, the Swiſs, the duke of Lorain, and Sigiſmund of Auſtria, brother to Frederic the emperor. He now made a new attempt to entice the king of England to hearken to an accommodation, and ſucceeded. That prince, who had fought ſeven or eight pitched battles †, who was now at the head of fifteen hundred men at arms, fourteen thouſand archers mounted on horſe-back, beſides infantry; a greater army of Engliſh than ever at once had paſſed the ſea into France, and who had the moſt favourable opportunity to attack that kingdom, diſcovered that he had under-taken the enterprize, much more from compliance with the humours of the Engliſh than from his own inclination and taſte for military glory, or the acquiſition of empire. Having the pretext that the duke of Burgundy had not opened the campaign, he concluded the treaty of Amiens and Picquiny, by which it appeared that Edward ‡ wanted only tolerable terms and a round ſum of money to make him quit the toilſome field of honour, and return to the indulgence of his favourite pleaſures. Seventy-two thou-ſand crowns advanced to him, and the ſtipulation of the marriage of the Dauphin, then a child, to his daughter Elizabeth, who was to have the dutchy of Guienne for her dowry, and for an imme-diate proviſion, fifty thouſand crowns for nine years, beſides rich preſents, and the promiſe of penſions to the amount of ſixteen thouſand crowns a year to ſeveral of his miniſters, were the allure-

Treaty of Amiens with Edward IV.

* De Comines, liv. iv. chap. 2. † Ibid. chap. 5. and 11.

‡ Ibid. chap. 8. Henault, p. 264.

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THE battle of Morat in Berry, which Charles of Burgundy fought with the Swiſs, commanded by Rene duke of Lorain, proved diſaſtrous to him, and the ſiege of Nanci, in which he afterwards engaged, and was attacked by the ſame adverſaries, occaſioned the loſs of his life, and the extinction of the ſecond family of Burgundy, after it had continued a hundred and twenty years under four princes *. He left a daughter, Mary, heireſs of his eſtates, who, though afterwards married to Maximilian, ſon to the Emperor Frederic III. could not ſave them from being invaded and diſmembered †. Lewis, who might have procured this match for the Dauphin his ſon, or rather on account of the propriety of his age, for the count de Angouleme, who was of a prince of the blood, and father to Francis I. was too jealous of aggrandizing the latter, and too revengeful againſt the houſe of Burgundy to adopt this ſcheme. He choſe, on the contrary, to employ the vileſt treachery as well as force, in order to tear in pieces the ſpoils of that hated family. His expoſition of the letters of the princeſs Mary, wrote in confidence and to obtain peace, was a ſpecimen of that perfidious policy, by which he ever endeavoured to accompliſh

* Ibid. chap. 11. Henault, p. 265. † Louvet, chap. 20.

his purpoſes *. Having exaſperated the people of Ghent againſt their ſovereign, and animated the other cities to make their privileges a pretext for uſurping the government; he made himſelf maſter of ſeveral towns in Picardy, Artois and Burgundy. Continuing to puſh his conqueſts into Franche comte, he was afraid of provoking the Engliſh court to renounce the treaty with him, and endeavoured by new terms of alliance †, by ſoothing Edward's indolence and vanity with the aſſurances of the marriage of the Dauphin to his daughter, and by pecuniary gratifications to divert that monarch, little inclined to war, from interpoſing. But while revenge and policy engaged him, in pillaging the dominions of the houſe of Burgundy, he was always too diffident of war to perſiſt in a long courſe of it, and after the drawn battle of Guienegate ‡, he made the treaty of Arras with the archduke Maximilian of Auſtria, which infringed that he had entered into with the king of England, with reſpect to the articles of the marriage of the Dauphin, who was now contracted to Maximilian's daughter, by Mary of Burgundy ‖. He even reſtored ſome towns he had taken in Hainault, from a pretended regard to the faith of treaties ſubſiſting between France and the empire, though he was evidently ſcrupulous about no ſort of perfidy, except he had ſworn on the croſs of St. Lo; an engagement, which out of a particular ſuperſtition he always declined. Maximilian demanded that the princes of the blood, inſtead of the peers of France, ſhould be guarantees of the treaty Lewis made with them.

Treaty of Arras.

Such are the capital paſſages of the hiſtory of that French monarch, who was ſucceſsful in his ſcheme of undermining or over-

* De Comines, ibid. chap. 16. † Ibid. liv. vi. chap. 2. ‡ Ibid. chap. 6.
‖ Henault, p. 267.

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* Henault, ibid. Mez. p. 668. De Comines, chap. 7. La Chron. Scandaleuze.

† Paſquier, liv. ii. chap. 16.

THE

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Reign of Charles VIII. 1483. and of Lewis XII. 1498.

THE ſurvey of the two following reigns of Charles VIII. and Lewis XII. may be comprehended within narrow bounds. We have ſeen the oppoſition of the only two great feudal vaſſals of France, which remained diſunited from the crown, repreſſed by the ſuperior energy of the royal power, wound up as it was to a high pitch by the policy of Lewis XI. At the concluſion of his reign, the hiſtory of the political revolutions of the monarchy is generally finiſhed by the French writers that have treated the ſubject. It is chiefly with a view to make ſome few additional obſervations, and for the ſake of carrying on the ſketch that has been given of the general hiſtory of France to a period, that our remarks are protracted through theſe reigns. That of Charles VIII. who was in minority, is introduced with a diſpute about the adminiſtration or regency of the ſtate, which we will have occaſion to mention more particularly afterwards. From the * aſſembly of the ſtates general, which met at Tours upon this occaſion, important decrees of reformation were expected. But after ſettling the general plan of government, and compoſing the diſſenſions of the princes of the blood, the whole proceedings were reſolved into a few ordinances, which annulled ſome of the arbitrary acts of the late reign, revoked the exorbitant grants that Lewis had made to ſome of his creatures, and reduced the moſt burdenſome parts of the taille. By a proſecution before the court of parliament of Paris, Oliver le Daim, and ſome other infamous favourites, were puniſhed with death or confiſcations.

BY the retreat of the duke of Orleans, firſt prince of the blood, into Britagne, and the intrigues he carried on in that dutchy, firſt by means of Landois, duke Francis's favourite miniſter, and after-

* De Serres. Mezerai, tom. v. p. 6.

wards

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* Henault, p. 272.

riage.

riage. Charles, though betrothed to Maximilian's daughter, who had lived for ſome time at the court of France as the future queen, having offered to teminate all conteſts about his claim upon Bretagne, by a match with Anne, his propoſals were hearkened to; and, by the mediation of the duke of Orleans, at length accepted. Margaret of Auſtria being ſent back, and the marriage concluded; the valuable acquiſition of Bretagne was in this manner made, and the royal houſe of France for once over-reached the fortune of the Auſtrian family, by a matrimonial purchaſe.

Acquiſition of the dutchy of Bretagne.

CHARLES's expedition into Italy in order to make the conqueſt of the kingdom of Naples, ſoon followed his poſſeſſion of Bretagne. The ſhort war that the king of England raiſed was inſufficient to divert him from this grand project; which carrying in it the idea of heroiſm and warlike glory, flattered the vanity of the young king, and was ſuited to the genius of the nation. Though * neither the age of Charles, nor his own abilities, or thoſe of his counſellors, nor the condition of his finances, ſeemed to be proportioned to ſuch an undertaking; the circumſtances of the kingdom rendered the attempt far leſs dangerous and more practicable to him than it could have been to any of his predeceſſors †. The forces he ſet on foot, conſiſting chiefly of ſixteen hundred gendarmery, with two archers to a lance, and twelve thouſand Swiſs and French infantry, were conſiderably augmented in number, by a great concourſe of the young nobility, who were ardent to ſhare the honours of the field and the glory of foreign conqueſts, with their monarch. At home, though ſeveral of the wiſeſt courtiers and moſt experienced captains remonſtrated againſt the enterprize, he

* De Comines, liv. vii. chap. 4.

† Mezerai, p. 57.

had

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had nothing to fear from the cabals of the nobles, or the diſcontent of the common people; eſpecially as he impoſed no new ſubſidies, but contented himſelf with borrowing ſome money from the bank of Genoa, and ſome petty princes of Italy, and receiving ſmall ſums and large promiſes from Ludovic Sforza, the perfidious uſurper of the dutchy of Milan and the chief prompter of the war. Italy, for a conſiderable time, had enjoyed that repoſe, which was favourable to induſtry and improvement in the neceſſary and ornamental arts, which are the ſources of profitable commerce and general wealth. Moſt of her princes, too weak to engage in foreign wars, endeavoured to ſecure themſelves againſt external aſſaults, and maintain their domeſtic tranquillity by a ſpecies of political addreſs and circumſpection, which was little ſtudied in other ſtates, and by forming confederacies of the weaker powers amongſt them, in order to reſtrain the uſurpations of the ſtronger. While the other more powerful neighbouring nations of France and Germany laboured under the natural convulſions of the feudal ſyſtem, the Italian ſtates quarrelled and waged war with each other, and compoſed their differences without running the riſque of being attacked and overwhelmed. But the more advanced growth of the French monarchy, and the gradual riſe of the Auſtrian powers in the empire, now become formidable and dangerous to them. It was evident that a country ſo fertile and rich, and ſo divided into petty principalities and republics, would be rendered the ſcene of war and contention. Charles VIII. who had concerted no previous plan, nor provided the proper ſinews of war, and who had only by means of his ally Sforza, ſecured a ſafe entrance into Italy, diſcovered the facility with which her cities and ſtates might be ſuddenly affaulted and overepowered *. In the ſpace of ſix months, he

Expedition of Charles into Italy.

* Henault, p. 276.

pene-

penetrated by Florence and Rome into the Neapolitan territory, expelled Ferdinand of Arragon from his capital, and made himſelf maſter of the kingdom. By a league concluded between the Venetians, the pope, the emperor Maximilian, and the perfidious duke of Milan, Charles's ability to maintain his conqueſt of Naples was rendered precarious, and even his return into France perilous. After his retreat the kingdom was ſoon loſt; but he had the glory of gaining the victory of Fornoua over the confederates, and of ſhewing what the French arms, under more proper conduct, were capable to effectuate.

THE diſapprobation which many of the French courtiers had expreſſed againſt the expedition into Naples, was now changed into a fondneſs for preſerving the conqueſt of that kingdom. It was thought that the king's honour and that of the nation were concerned to retain ſuch an acquiſition *. But the ſenſible alteration of Charles's health, which opened to the duke of Orleans the proſpect of ſucceeding to the crown, diſturbed the reſolutions and meaſures that were formed with reſpect to it, and the deſign was at length entirely laid aſide. In the concluſion of his reign, it is ſaid that Charles ſhewed a diſpoſition to have regulated the courts of juſtice and the affairs of the finances of his kingdom, and to have raiſed no more than twelve hundred thouſand franks by the taille, to be granted by the ſtates general upon extraordinary emergencies, while the common expences of his court might be defrayed by the produce of the domain, which, with the antient aids and gabelles that were conſidered as a part of it, was computed to exceed a million of franks †. But the eſtabliſhment which diſtinguiſhed

* De Comines, liv. viii. chap. 15. Mez. ibid. p. 80. † Paſquier, liv. ii. chap. 6.

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Eſtabliſhment of the great council.

this reign was that of the great council. The ſtates general at Tours had repreſented to the king, that it was neceſſary to have ſuch a council for the ſupreme adminiſtration of juſtice in arduous affairs, both civil and eccleſiaſtic. The matter being brought to the parliament 1497, an edict was framed for erecting what was formerly called the king's council, into the form of an ordinary court, in which the chancellor might preſide, and ſeventeen counſellors ſit in judgment. Yet the decree was not executed till the following reign of Lewis XII. who added two lay counſellors and one prelate to the number of its members. As its juriſdiction was never properly aſcertained, the parliament of Paris ſoon diſcovered a jealouſy of its judicial authority, and in Francis I.'s reign refuſed to be connected with it. Though the great council regularly judged of no cauſes that were in proceſs before other courts; yet the kings began to evoke queſtions depending before the parliaments to this tribunal, of which the following hiſtory affords ſome inſtances. It is unneceſſary to add any deſcription of the privy council, which came to be diſtinguiſhed by its name, after the erection of the great one. Attempts were alſo made to render the privy council a court of law inſtead of a council of ſtate. In this manner thoſe inſtitutions of the monarchy contributed to invigorate the power of the royalty.

Reign of Lewis XII.

WHAT was chiefly wanting in the reign of Charles VIII, a character in the head of the monarchy, attractive of the eſteem and veneration of the French nation, was found in that of Lewis XII. who uſhered in his adminiſtration with that noble and memorable maxim, "*That a king of France ought not to reſent the quarrels of the duke of Orleans.*" Though he became the conqueror of the dutchy of Milan * in ten days, and in league with Ferdinand,

* Henault, p. 280.

called

called the Catholic King of Spain, ſubdued the kingdom of Naples, which was divided between them; and, though he gave the law in a great meaſure to the other Italian ſtates, it is not from his military enterprizes, nor the renown of his arms, that the eſtimate is to be made of the merit of Lewis as a ſovereign, and of the felicity of his reign. On a political judgment of his leagues and alliances, various errors and faults may rather be imputed to him. In that period, indeed, from the general ignorance or contracted views of the princes and ſtates, with reſpect to the maintaining a balance of power among them, as well as the groſs perfidy of ſeveral of the potentates, conſiſtency of conduct or adherence to a diſtinct plan of policy by any one of them, may be almoſt reckoned an impoſſibility. The ſettlement of the peace of Italy, where ſo many jars and repugnant intereſts were to be adjuſted, was a buſineſs too intricate for the politicians of that age. A pope, ſuch as Alexander VI. was, an infamous adventurer like his ſon Cæſar Borgia; and even a king like Ferdinand the Catholic, were characters framed to embroil the turbulent ſcene of action. In the courſe of the Italian wars, Lewis XII. was obliged to enter into ſeveral treaties and alliances with Ferdinand, whoſe faithleſsneſs he had proved, and * who even boaſted of having deceived him. Having too much ſupported one pope unworthy of favour and protection, he ſtrove to oppoſe the inſolence of another, in circumſtances rather unfavourable for his deſign. His fortune in the field changed, and almoſt all his Italian conqueſts were loſt; but the reputation of his abilities and of his power ſo far remained, that it required no great effort of prudence to extricate himſelf from thoſe difficulties, and to repair in ſome degree his loſſes, by means of treaties and alliances formed with more addreſs and caution.

* Ibid. p. 288.

PART I. During all thoſe wars, though in the end unſucceſsful, the murmurs of the nation were never heard. The eaſe the people found by the abatement of the taxes in the late reign, was increaſed by him, * and his great œconomy, which in political matters he is reckoned to have carried to a faulty extreme, proceeded evidently from his anxious concern to ſpare them the burden of the ſubſidies. His troops generally in action, and ſubſiſted in the enemy's country, or in the frontier towns, gave no annoyance to the tradeſmen or the labourers; and the diſcipline of his companies of ordonnance was ſuch, that ſeveral provinces petitioned to have them lodged with them. The cities became populous, and trade unincumbered with impoſts, flouriſhed in them, while the country, cultivated in ſecurity, abounded with the proviſions of induſtry and peaceful labour. His attention to the diſtribution of juſtice, and the ratification of the laws, was no leſs remarkable; and he publiſhed no edicts relative to the ſtate, but what were ſubmitted to the judgment, and received the approbation of the parliament of Paris and other ſovereign courts. From the order and equity of his government, joined to a ſignal benevolence to his ſubjects, he obtained in his life-time the illuſtrious title of the *father* of his people. His divorce from Jean of Valois, daughter to Lewis XI. in order to his marriage with Anne of Bretagne, widow of Charles VIII. though deemed by ſome a contraſt to the benignity of his temper, was juſtifiable from very intereſting reaſons of ſtate. The dutchy of Bretagne, by the terms of the matrimonial contract with Charles, would have been again disjoined from the crown, and of heirs to the royalty by Jean, no proſpect could be entertained. In the felicity of ſurviving heirs, notwithſtanding of his ſubſequent marriage with Mary of England,

* Mezerai, p. 225. De Serres.

Lewis

5

Lewis failed; but his daughter Claude, eſpouſed Francis count of Angouleme, firſt prince of the blood, by whoſe acceſſion to the crown, it paſſed only for a third time into a collateral branch of the Capetian line.

THROUGH ſuch a long gradation of time and events did the French monarchy paſs before it attained to a regular and ſettled eſtabliſhment. Under the influence of the feudal ſyſtem, its ſituation and fate may be obſerved to have been evidently different from that of England, where an abſolute conqueſt being made by William duke of Normandy, the principles of feudal policy were rendered ſubſervient to the conſtitution and enlargement of the power of the ſovereign. His forfeitures and confiſcations of almoſt the whole land-property in this kingdom, inveſted him with the exerciſe of the rights of the arbitrary lord of the territory. His model of the fiefs was not challenged, nor the tenor of his charters conteſted by powerful vaſſals. But in France we have ſeen, that the laws of the fiefs aſſumed a form that favoured the privileges and independancy of the great vaſſals of the crown, whoſe aggrandizement not only counterbalanced the royal power, but for a long time kept it depreſſed, after the ſubverſion of the fundamental principles of feudal ſyſtem. In conſequence of the reduction of thoſe great fiefs of the crown, the monarchy became conſolidated. Its conſtitutional rules and ordinances introduced by the efforts of ſucceeding princes, and confirmed by time and conjunctures, were more corroborated and improved. The ſtate and kingdom exhibited the model of a regular monarchy, eſtabliſhed on peculiar principles that appeared to ingraft thoſe of loyalty and political ſubordination and obedience upon the prevailing ideas and ſentiments of the times, as well as on the ſettled forms of the governnment. The aſſignment of dignities and preferments

Conſtitution of the French ſtate in the reigns of Francis I. and Henry II.

PART I. preferments to the nobility, according to their different ranks, was no leſs eſſential to the regular movement of the political ſyſtem of the monarchy, than the aſſembling of the ſtates general in the exigencies of the nation, and maintaining the courts of parliament in the functions of judicature. Though acquitted from the military ſervices of their fiefs, the nobles and their vaſſals retained the uſe of arms. The caſtles of the lords, ſtored with their military equipages, were places of rendezvous for the youth trained up to no other exerciſes * or employments, but thoſe of the martial kind. Tournaments and jouſts were ordinary entertainments of the court, as well as the favourite diverſions of the gentry and common people. The great cities and towns, walled and fortified as they had been in the more turbulent times of the feudal government, were generally either attached to the intereſt and ſervice of particular lords, whoſe lands bordered upon them; or fond of governing themſelves upon the footing of their acquired rights and privileges. Ambitious of the favour of the prince, who diſpenſed honorary titles and lucrative employments, the nobles were drawn to the court, which began to hold forth the baits of enticing pleaſures and gallantry. A romantic devotion to the fair ſex accompanied their introduction at the court; and the manners too rough and warlike to be refined by this experiment, became in a great degree licentious and diſſolute. But it was ſufficient for the improvement and ſtrength of the monarchical government of France that the nobility were impelled by efficacious motives to haunt the court and its entertainments, without reſigning their predominant taſte for war and the camp.

THIS then was the conſtitution and genius of the French ſtate and nation in the reign of Frances I. and of his ſon Henry II. about

* Henault. p. 598.

which

which period moſt of the other kingdoms and ſtates of Europe attained to thoſe regular and fixed forms of government, and alſo to that compaſs of relative power and dominion, by which, for a long time after they were diſtinguiſhed. Germany, whoſe collective ſtrength ſeemed moſt likely to overwhelm the balance, was retained within the level of equality, by the prevalence of the feudal ſyſtem, in its ſeveral principalities, whilſt its general coherence as a political body had been ſtrengthened ever ſince the famous conſtitution called the * *golden bull*, framed a hundred and fifty years before by Charles IV. for regulating the form of the election of the emperors, and the number, functions, and privileges of the electoral princes. Spain, by the political arts and induſtry of Ferdinand the Catholic, was alſo formed into an united kingdom, and much increaſed in opulence and power. By the equal advancement of the grandeur of the monarchies of England and France, the ſeveral great powers of Europe appeared to be ſo conſtituted, that an equilibrium might be eaſily maintained among them; and after a long ſeries of inteſtine broils and romantic wars that had plunged the different nations in bloodſhed and barbarity, they might enjoy a reſpite favourable to the improvement of their laws, their manners and arts. But the ſucceſſion of Charles of Auſtria to the kingdoms of Spain, and of Naples and Sicily, and the inheritances of Auſtria and the Low Countries, was ſufficient to beget a new alarm, and ſhew the danger to which the other ſtates would be expoſed by this exorbitant aggrandizement of one monarch. His acquiſition of the imperial crown ſtill rendered him more formidable. Francis I. ſtood in competition with him for this dignity, and from various grounds of quarrel between them,

* Hiſt. de l'Empire, par Heiſ. liv. ii. chap. 4.

had

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had to maintain, with inconſiderable aſſiſtance from other princes, a dangerous conflict for dominion againſt ſo powerful an adverſary. But while the dread of the conquering power of Charles V. diminiſhed apace, and it became viſible from the diſappointment of his projects, that the ſtates of Europe would eſcape being involved in that ſubjection and barbarity, of which an unwieldy empire is almoſt always productive; a new ſource of internal confuſion was engendered among them. As if, in every article of policy, the Gothic kingdoms of Europe had been fated to diſcover ſome groſs deficiency of their principles of government, the ſad effects of that antipathy and prejudice entertained againſt liberty of conſcience, and of condemning and perſecuting all inſtances of religious difference and ſchiſm, began to appear. In the ſplendid reigns of Francis and Henry, when the ſpirit of the nation was exalted with a paſſion for military glory, and the taſte for letters and ſcience revived; enthuſiaſm in religion alike characterized the church and the ſtate. But ſuch an abſtract of the civil and eccleſiaſtical affairs of France in theſe two reigns, as is connected with the particular ſubject of this hiſtory, will be more properly thrown into a ſeparate ſection.

THE HISTORY of FRANCE.

PART II.

Review of the political revolutions, and general hiſtory of the French monarchy, from its origin, under Clovis.

SECTION I.

Reign of Francis I.—*Houſe of Bourbon diſcredited—Families of Guiſe and Montmorency advanced in dignity—Reign of Henry* II.—*War with the emperor Charles* V.—*Recommencement of it under Philip* II. *Battle of St. Quintin.—Calais taken— Peace of Cateau—Cambreſis.*

THE right of ſucceſſion to the crown of France being confined to the male line, the younger ſons of the king and their poſterity ſtood in the rank of lords or princes of the blood, who were capable upon the failure of the eldeſt branch, of inheriting the

PART II. royalty. Conſidered as the natural ſupports of the crown, and the pledges of its perpetuity in the family, the higheſt dignities and honours of the ſtate were often conferred on them. In the king's minority they were called to the chief adminiſtration or regency of the kingdom. And the nation accuſtomed to behold them frequently placed at the helm of government, or at the head of armies, entertained a regard and attachment to them, ſimilar to what was ſhewn to the reigning family *. Whilſt the houſe of Valois, of the Capetian race, inherited the crown, the deſcendants of Robert count of Clermont, youngeſt ſon of St. Lewis, became, in the middle of the thirteenth century, the ſecond branch of the royal line; and having acquired by marriage the eſtate and title of Bourbon, maintained the dignity of their blood with magnificence and honour. The other ſubſequent collaterals of the royal houſe dropping off, this family ſubſiſted till the reign of Francis I. for near three hundred years, illuſtrious by the advantages of an opulent fortune, and a numerous offspring; many of whom diſtinguiſhed themſelves by military valour and renown. Unequal however in grandeur and opulence to the great vaſſals of the crown, they became, not like them, aliens to the monarchy, nor objects of jealouſy and averſion to the royal family, till a ſingular event happened in Francis's reign, which not only affected the intereſt and favour of the princes of Bourbon; but was followed with moſt important conſequences to the kingdom.

Origin of the family of Bourbon.

Reign of Francis I. 1515. Charles Duke of Bourbon made conſtable of France.

THE office of conſtable of France, which had remained dormant after the death of the count de St. Pol, in the reign of Lewis XI. was revived by Francis in favour of Charles duke of Bourbon, the eldeſt of that family and firſt prince of the blood. His perſonal

* Louvet, chap. 22. Henault, p. 155.

valour

valour and magnanimity already conſpicuous, were ſignalized in the execution of it. The chief honour of the victory over the Swiſs at Marignan, and of the conqueſt of the Milaneze, was generally aſcribed to him. With a genius ſuited both to the cabinet and the field, his ſentiments of honour and his moderation appeared to correſpond to his other qualities. But the keen reſentment conceived againſt him by Louiſa of Savoy, the queen mother, proved a trial of his temper, extremely difficult to be endured. In a woman naturally violent and vindictive, diſdained love had produced its uſual conſequence. She employed all her intereſt with the king her ſon to have the duke of Bourbon treated with marks of diſgrace, and prevailed ſo far *, that he was recalled from his command in the Milaneze after the higheſt ſucceſs, and his appointments were retrenched; and at laſt, the duke of Alencon, married to the king's ſiſter, was intruded into the functions of his office. Though the hiſtorians vary in their accounts of circumſtances, the generality of them agree, that the conſtable bore this uſage without unbecoming expreſſions of indignation, or deviating from the ſentiments of duty and loyalty. Upon the death of his ſon, of his wife and his mother-in-law, the queen mother in concert with Anthony du Prat the chancellor, commenced a proceſs before the parliament of Paris to diſpoſſeſs him of the rich eſtate acquired by his marriage, and alſo to diſpute with him in the king's right, his titles to the patrimonial inheritance of Bourbon †. For the ſake of the curious, it may be remarked, that the ſubject in conteſt was no leſs than two dukedoms, four counties, two viſcounties, ſeveral baronies and caſtellanies, beſides a great number of petty lordſhips. After ſeveral audiences and adjournments of the cauſe; a ſentence

* Paſquier, ibid. chap. 12. Le Gendre, tom. i. p. 40. † Paſquier, chap. 11.

PART II. of proviſional ſequeſtration was paſſed by the court of parliament againſt the duke of Bourbon; who, from being the greateſt territorial proprietor in France, was excluded from the poſſeſſion of his whole lands, until the final iſſue of a litigious trial of his rights.

His conſpiracy and treaty with Charles V.

IT was in theſe ſingular circumſtances, that Charles duke of Bourbon, yielding to the dictates of indignation, meditated a revolt from his allegiance. It is doubtful whether he firſt made his complaint and diſloyal addreſs to the emperor Charles V. or was previouſly ſolicited to revenge by that monarch *. But the commiſſion given to Beaurein, his firſt chamberlain, to go in diſguiſe into France, and negotiate with the conſtable the ſplendid offer of marrying his ſiſter to him, and other ſuch allurements, proved how induſtrious and eager Charles was to ſeduce ſo diſtinguiſhed and powerful a chieftain into a treaty with him. By the articles of it, and the acceſſion of Henry VIII. of England as a party, an invaſion of France in ſeveral quarters, and the diſmembering of the monarchy, were projected. A diſcovery of the treaſonable correſpondence and the conſtable's flight into Italy enſued. Diſabled from performing any part of his criminal engagements to the emperor, and an exile under the ſtain of treachery, Charles of Bourbon ſtill carried the former renown of his name, and of his eminent fortune along with him. He was employed in beſieging Marſeilles, and in ſeveral campaigns, by the emperor, and was one of the three generals who fought the memorable battle of Pavia, in which a total overthrow was given to the royal army of France, and to aggravate the diſaſter, and diſplay a ſignal revolution of fortune, Francis himſelf was taken priſoner.

Battle of Pavia.

* Paſquier, chap. 12.

THOUGH

THOUGH from the early detection of the duke of Bourbon's conſpiracy, inſurrections which he endeavoured to ſtir up in the kingdom were prevented, yet it created an alarm that was hurtful to the government and to the conduct of the public affairs *. It retarded Francis's expedition into Italy, and obliged him to keep the troops prepared for it at home, while an inquiſition was made after the abettors of the duke's treaſon, and thoſe ſuſpected to have connived with him. But if the formal ſentence for high treaſon pronounced againſt Charles of Bourbon tended to the diſcredit of his family, the ſubſequent overthrow and captivity of Francis at Pavia would contribute to heighten the public reſentment of his treacherous revolt, and to extend it in ſome meaſure to thoſe who ſtood in affinity to him. This diſaſter ſo fatal to the honour and intereſt of France, and ſo alarming in the proſpect of its conſequences to other ſtates of Europe, was not only attributed to his diſloyalty, but reckoned to be a triumph to it, of which all the connections of his blood, who felt for the calamity of the kingdom, had reaſon to be aſhamed †. Charles duke of Vendoſme, the repreſentative of the family, and now firſt prince of the blood, ſenſible of the diſadvantageous light in which he might appear, refuſed to accept the offer of the regency from the parliament of Paris, who were diſſatisfied with the conduct of the queen mother, and deſired to exclude her from the government during the time of the king's captivity. That he might not ſeem to wiſh or hope for this advancement, which he feared would contribute to render him and the reſt of his kindred more odious, he ſet out as ſoon as the propoſition was made to him to attend the queen mother at Lions, where ſhe had convened an aſſembly of the notables for

The family of Bourbon diſcredited.

* Paſquier, chap. 12. † Brantome, duodec. edit. a Leyden, tom. i. p. 368.

obtaining

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obtaining the confirmation of her authority *. Yet after the releaſe of Francis, neither this inſtance of prudent reſerve, nor the appearances of merit, amongſt thoſe of the Bourbon blood, availed to remove the prejudices entertained againſt him on account of the crime of their chief, in the guilt of which they were in no reſpect partakers. Without favour at court, or encouragement to aſpire to their former rank and intereſt in the ſtate, they were allowed to remain in retirement, whilſt other families, eſpecially thoſe of Guiſe and Montmorency, were introduced into the higheſt offices of the government; and, by the opportunity they had of extending their credit and intereſt, laid a foundation for the prevalence of both, that with little interruption continued during the moſt part of Francis's reign, and under four ſucceeding monarchs.

The houſe of Lorain.

THE eſtabliſhment of the houſe of Lorain in France may be conſidered as a moſt remarkable event in the hiſtory of that kingdom. An example of ſuch powerful intereſt and aſcendancy acquired in a ſhort courſe of time, and ſo long maintained by a family of foreigners in ſuch a monarchy as France then was, is ſcarcely to be found †. The houſe of Lorain, by the female ſide, was indeed deſcended from Charlemagne, and had an undoubted title by propinquity of blood to ſucceed to the crown of France, when Hugh Capet obtained the royal dignity. This antiquated connexion with the royal houſe of France, unſupported by any ſubſequent affinity, and expunged by a long interval of ſeven centuries, might illuſtrate their anceſtry, but could not contribute to favour their reception and intereſt in the kingdom. John and Claud, the younger brothers of Anthony duke of Lorain, were

* D'Avila, liv. i.

† Addit aux Caſtelnau, par le Laboureur, fol. edit. a Bruxelles, liv. i. p. 279.

the

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the firſt who puſhed their way to honour and fame in France. The former bred up to the church, rendered himſelf gracious to Francis I. by his addreſs and manners, being adapted to the taſte of that monarch for magnificence and expenſive pleaſure, and obtained the biſhoprick of Metz, which was a benefice no leſs conſiderable than the title of cardinal of Lorain proved in dignity *. The other attained a high degree of military reputation, which attracted the eſteem of Francis, and the admiration of the French nation, naturally fond of martial atchievements and renown. In the battle of Marignan, fought near Milan with the Swiſs †, he was trod down by the cavalry, and lay on the field, covered by the dead body of his equerry from deſtruction. He was entruſted with the government of Champagne, and had the county of Guiſe erected into a dutchy for him; notwithſtanding the parliament of Paris ſeveral times remonſtrated againſt this innovation upon the order of the antient peerage of the kingdom. This advancement to power and dignity was further ſupported by James V. of Scotland, being eſpouſed to Mary, daughter to Claud duke of Guiſe, and widow of Lewis duke of Longueville. From the enſuing ſtate of Scotland, the family of Guiſe by this alliance became the chief directors of all affairs relative to that kingdom, which was then regarded by the French as a ready curb to the encroachments and power of England. Toward the cloſe of Francis's reign, when this monarch became peeviſh from bodily diſtemper, the duke of Guiſe incurred his diſpleaſure by raiſing ſome companies of ſoldiers in France without his authority, and ſending them to be employed in the ſervice of his brother the duke of Lorain ‡. The cardinal,

Advancement of two younger brothers of it to dignities in France.

* Hiſt. de France, par Matthieu, fol. edit. liv. ii. p. 58. † Brantome, ibid. p. 398. Henault, p. 301. ‡ Thuanus, fol. edit. Offenbachi, liv. vi. p. 122.

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Family of Montmorency.

THE name and family of Montmorency was very antient in France *. The progenitor of it was alledged to be the firſt of the Franks who received the chriſtian faith and baptiſm; and the device which they bore in their coat of arms expreſſed this peculiar claim to antiquity. Many lords eminent for wealth and power deſcended from this ſtock; but the luſtre and dignity of the family was advanced to a higher pitch by the appearance of Anne of Montmorency in Francis's reign. His judgment, his induſtry, his circumſpection and firmneſs of mind were ſufficient to have raiſed his intereſt and fortune almoſt under any government. Valiant and active in the field, though generally unſucceſsful, he ſeemed to defy the oppoſition of fortune even in that ſphere, where her favours are uſually allowed to decide the reputation and merit of men. The poſt aſſigned him by Francis, when the emperor Charles V. penetrated into Provence at the head of a powerful army, and threw the whole kingdom into the utmoſt danger, ſhewed that ſomething more than the diſplay of courage and ſkill in a ſingle day of

Its dignity advanced by Anne, created high conſtable of France.

* Brantome, tom. ii. p. 119. Thuan. ibid.

action,

action was expected from the ſtrength of his genius and ſagacious counſels. He commanded the main diviſion of the French army, which oppoſed the progreſs of the emperor, and without attempting any hazardous combat, employed the moſt effectual methods to annoy and diſtreſs the enemy, and effectuated their ruin and retreat in a ſhort time. While ſome raſh critics in the art of war preſumed to find fault with his want of boldneſs to purſue them; others with more reaſon ſaid the conſtable did wiſely in not compelling the lion, when he fled, to face about, and try the utmoſt effort of his rage *. It was after this illuſtrious proof of his capacity that the dignity of high conſtable of France, and the ſuperintendance of the treaſury, was beſtowed upon him. Francis enhanced this reward of his merit, by conferring it in the moſt public and honourable manner, in the preſence of a numerous meeting of the princes and grandees of the kingdom. Henceforth the judgment of all weighty affairs was remitted to his arbitration. The government of provinces, the magiſtrates of cities, the court of parliament itſelf, and foreign ambaſſadors, ſaw it neceſſary to apply to him in all caſes of moment and difficulty. The cardinal of Lorain, truſting to his perſonal intereſt with the king, alone made a ſhew of diſregarding the credit and influence of the conſtable.

THE particular ground of Francis's offence againſt him, and of his removal from court, is ſaid to have ariſen from the advice he gave with reſpect to the ſafe conduct and reception of the emperor in France †, when he ſought a paſſage through the kingdom in his way to quell an inſurrection in the city of Ghent. Charles,

* Brantome, ibid. p. 122. Le Gendre, tom. i. p. 42.
† Matthieu, liv. ii. p. 32. D'Avila, ibid.

PART II. whilſt his heart was expanded by the princely entertainment he received from Francis, had given ſome aſſurance that he would reſign his pretenſions to Milan, but afterwards repented of this liberal declaration. This inconſtancy of the emperor was, it ſeems, turned to the prejudice of the conſtable, as if the counſel he gave had rendered him reſponſible for Charles's integrity. That propenſity indeed, which Francis had to quarrel with Charles, will account for his taking an exception to the conſtable, and finding fault with his conduct where no juſt objection to it appeared. Beſides ſome other conjectural reaſons for the king's diſſatisfaction with his miniſter, one of a more general nature is likewiſe aſſigned by D'Avila and other hiſtorians, who aſcribe it to a political maxim adopted by Francis, that it was inconvenient and dangerous to retain men of the moſt eminent abilities in the adminiſtration of government. It is uſeleſs to diſpute the authority of hiſtorians upon an aſſertion of this kind; but it may be obſerved, that a biaſs to ſuch a narrow and illiberal maxim hardly correſponds with the quick and diſtinguiſhing ſenſe and approbation of merit, which appears in the general turn of Francis's character. A ſenſible variation certainly appeared in his temper and diſpoſition ſome years before his death, from whatever cauſe it proceeded. A natural one already mentioned is perhaps the juſteſt explication of the change remarked both in the man and the king. The cardinal of Tournen, and the admiral Annebaut, men of capacity and figure, but leſs aſpiring and ambitious, were ſubſtituted in the room of the duke of Guiſe and the conſtable.

Princes of Bourbon diſtinguiſhed by their valour.

THOUGH the princes of the Bourbon family were obſcured by the appearance and elevation of others to the higheſt honours and offices of the government, ſeveral of them are mentioned in the catalogue

catalogue of the diſtinguiſhed chieftains of this active and warlike reign *. Charles duke of Vendoſme had the government of Picardy, and often bore important commands in the army. His brother Francis, count of St. Pol, who is named amongſt the priſoners taken at Pavia, had acquired a conſiderable ſhare of military renown. It was he who told Claud, count of Guiſe, when he inſiſted upon the title he and his brother had to be called princes, that *he ſpoke high German in French.* But the valour and ſpirited character of the count of Enquien, ſecond ſon to the duke of Vendoſme, merited the higheſt encomiums. When ſcarce twenty years of age, his reputation was equal to that of the moſt experienced generals in the army. Being appointed to the chief command of the armies in Savoy and Piedmont, he drew after him to this ſchool of martial honour and diſcipline, great numbers of the young nobility; and by gaining a compleat victory over the marquis Du Guaſs near the town of Carignar, prompted them to emulation and glory †. The untimely and violent death that befel this youthful hero, when engaged with Henry the Dauphin, the count of Aumale and other lords, in a mock battle, was reckoned a public misfortune which the kingdom had cauſe to lament, as well as the deceaſe of the eldeſt ſon of France.

Abſtract of the reign of Henry II. 1547.

WHEN Henry II. ſucceeded to the crown, he followed the inclination and taſte which his father Francis ſhewed in the choice of his miniſters ‡, in the early and moſt renowned period of his life and reign, and not the ſcrupulous maxims he adopted in the latter part of his days. Alike diſpoſed to the enterprizes of war, and the pleaſures of love and gallantry, the young monarch thought

* Matth. liv. iv. p. 217. Brantome, tom. i. p. 369. and 385. † Thuan. lib. ii. p. 48. Henault, p. 389. ‡ Matthieu, liv. ii. p. 33. Henault, p. 312.

PART II. only of celebrating his reign by addreſs in both. He had already choſe for his miſtreſs Diana of Poictiers, widow of Lewis de Breze, to whom, at the forty-ſeventh year of her age, he made an entire ſurrender of his heart, and publicly avowed his attachment to her, by all imaginable tokens of courteſy and devotion. The emblematic bow and arrows of Diana were to be ſeen ſtamped on the furniture of the palace, on his armour, and the frontiſpiece of the royal edifices. The œconomy begun in the end of Francis's reign was dropt, and the miniſters accuſtomed to the parcimonious ſyſtem were diſmiſſed from court; that the largeſſes of the king, and the prodigalities of the miſtreſs might be circumſcribed by no formal rules. The cardinal of Tournon, with other ſeven members of the ſacred college, whoſe appearance at court ſeemed a contraſt to the change introduced there, were ordered to repair to Rome, under pretext of ſupporting the French intereſt in the event of the vacancy of the holy ſee, expected by the age of Paul III. The admiral Annebaut was obliged to reſign his office of marſhal, which was given to James D'Albon, lord of St. Andre, one of the chief barons of Dauphiny. The duke of Guiſe and the conſtable Montmorency were recalled to court, and again employed in the chief offices of government.

The duke of Guiſe, and the conſtable Montmorency recalled to court.

AT the ceremony of the coronation, the duke of Guiſe repreſented one of the ſix antient peers, and took place of Lewis of Bourbon, duke of Montpenſier, though a prince of the blood *, which gave occaſion afterwards to a diſpute about precedency. His eldeſt ſon Francis was likewiſe honoured with a peerage; the county of Aumale being by Henry erected into a dutchy. The ſignal proof

* Matthieu, p. 40. Thuan. lib. v. p. 102. ibid. p. 24.

of

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of fortitude he gave at the ſiege of Boulogne in the late reign, early procured him admiration and fame. In a ſally from the town he was ſtruck with a lance under the right eye, which pierced the cheek-bone with ſuch violence as to bury the iron-head and ſome part of the wood in the wound. Notwithſtanding the forcible blow he was not thrown from his horſe, but returned from the charge with the ſpear-head broke off by the Shaft, and ſo fixed that the point of it appeared behind his ear. He bore the painful extraction by pincers without trepidation; by which his courageous ſpirit and his cure became conſpicuous and memorable. Beſides a high degree of perſonal valour, he poſſeſſed many other qualities, calculated to grace his character at court and engage the public eſteem *. Eaſy and condeſcending, in his behaviour generous and ſpirited; he appeared to merit the higheſt honours to which he aſpired. As Henry, from a natural reliſh of his manners, had for ſome time treated the duke as a favourite, his acceſſion to the crown appeared to throw open to him the way to the moſt eminent dignities in the ſtate. His brother Charles, who being archbiſhop of Rheims, was upon his uncle's death created a cardinal, diſplayed his genius for political management, and the intrigues of the court in a manner no leſs remarkable †. By inſinuation and flattery he is ſaid to have gained the ear of the dutcheſs of Valentinois, and inſtigated that powerful charmer of Henry to ſtretch her influence at court to a pitch, that even her natural vanity and preſumption would have hardly attempted. Having obtained the gift of the confirmation of the commiſſions and offices of ſtate, at Henry's acceſſion to the crown, ſhe was adviſed by him to turn this boon both to a lucrative and political purpoſe, by taking the opportunity

Remarkable inſtance of Guiſe's fortitude.

Political influence of the dutcheſs of Valentinois.

* D'Avila, liv. i. † Thuan. liv. vi. 122. Brantome, tom. ii. p. 10.

the

PART II. the vacation of the poſts afforded, of beſtowing a number of the principal ones upon ſuch as would own the obligation of their continuance in them to her favour, and depend on it for their promotion. In this manner the moſt irregular and inſidious methods were taken to deprive ſeveral who held them with the character of honour and integrity, in order to make way for adepts in the new ſyſtem. The cardinal took the advantage which the proſecution of his ſcheme afforded, of diſplacing ſome of his perſonal adverſaries. Peter Lizet, the firſt preſident of the parliament of Paris, who had ſhewn ſome inſtance of diſreſpect to him, was ſtript of that dignity. The chancellor, Francis Oliver, who could not by the laws be compelled to a reſignation of his high office, whilſt his fidelity and reputation defied all impeachment, was however obliged, under pretence of the weakneſs of his eye-ſight, to ſurrender the ſeals; the charge of which was given by commiſſion from the king to Bertrandi, lately admitted to the office of firſt preſident of the parliament.

HENRY, whoſe thoughts were chiefly turned to warlike fame and gallantry, ſuffered theſe changes amongſt his miniſters and officers to take place, without apprehenſion of the conſequences of them. He was, however, fortunate in having himſelf no inclination to rule by a faction. His fondneſs for martial renown diſpoſed him to favour and encourage all whoſe genius and abilities were fitted to acquire it. Hence the growth and aſcendance of a particular party was checked by a prince, who always led his armies to the field, and was an impartial witneſs and judge of the ſervices and conduct of his officers. The re-eſtabliſhment of the conſtable Montmorency in his office and rank in the ſtate, proved in this way of ſingular advantage to his adminiſtration; which, conſidering

conſidering the various circumſtances that concurred to advance the power and intereſt of the princes of Lorain, needed ſuch a counterpoiſe to maintain it in equilibrio. His great abilities, conſummated by experience; his fidelity and zeal in the public ſervice, ſuſtained his reputation, and rendered him equal to his rivals when exalted by the moſt glaring and ſucceſsful atchievements of war. Henry underſtood the conſtable's importance in the government, and was tenacious in diſtinguiſhing him with marks of his eſteem and confidence *. His eſtate of Montmorency was erected into a peerage; an honour which formerly had been conferred on none of the nobility, but ſuch as were of the blood royal or princes by deſcent.

AMBITIOUS and full of ardor as Henry was to engage in war, and enter the liſts with Charles V. he found the preſent ſituation of foreign affairs unfavourable to his deſign †. The truce which that monarch had lately made with Solyman the Ottoman emperor, for five years, and the great advantages he had gained over the proteſtant princes of the empire by the victory of Mulberg, gave him ſuch a viſible ſuperiority, as daſhed the ſanguine hopes of attacking him with ſucceſs. Henry was obliged to content himſelf with encouraging the princes and cities of Germany, not to ſuccumb under their diſaſters; and privately aſſuring them of his intentions to ſend them, at a proper ſeaſon, ſuitable ſuccours and relief. He took care, in the mean time, to ſtrengthen his frontier towns, and to form the blockade of Boulogne, which was poſſeſſed by the Engliſh, who in a ſhort time ſurrendered it to him, on the condition of paying the ſum of 400,000 crowns ‡. The affairs of Scotland alſo required immediate attention, on account of the Eng-

* Matthieu, p. 78. † Ibid. 38. ‡ Matthieu, ibid. p. 54. Brantome Eloge de la Reigne d'Eſcoſſe.

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liſh invaſion of that kingdom, with a powerful army, which was intended to compel the Scots to agree to a treaty about the future marriage of the heireſs of their crown, only ſix years old, with Edward VI. who had ſucceeded to the crown of England at the age of ten. A body of ſix thouſand men being ſent to Scotland, under the command of Deffe Epanvilliers, attended by Peter Strozzi, and D'Andelot of Chattellon, the Engliſh power and intereſt was ſucceſsfully oppoſed; and by the prevalence of Mary of Guiſe's party, and the national jealouſies of the Engliſh domination, the conſent of the ſtates was obtained for carrying the young queen to the court of France, in order to be trained up in a manner ſuitable to her birth, until a negotiation for eſpouſing her to the Dauphin could be entered upon and completed.

Mary queen of Scots carried into France.

THE proper ſeaſon for entering into a confederacy with the German princes againſt the emperor, which Henry longed for, ſoon came *. Maurice of Saxony, advanced by Charles to the dominion of that electorate, in place of his couſin, and who was intruſted to command the imperial forces in the ſiege of Magdeburg, became diſpoſed to change ſides. His apprehenſion of the conſequence of the total reduction of the electoral princes under the power of the emperor, and his reſentment of the arbitrary detention of the Landgrave of Heſſe, his father-in-law, a priſoner; the pretence for which was only founded on the ambiguity of a German word made uſe of in his compact with Charles, and explained by that prince in the moſt diſadvantageous way, were Maurice's motives for this deviation from the tie of honour, and his deſertion of the emperor's intereſt. By means of a ſecret treaty with this artful and able commander, and the diſburſement of a large ſum of money amongſt

* Matthieu, p. 85.

the

the German princes, Henry found means of entering with advantage into the wiſhed for field of renown. The pretext for a declaration of war with Charles was eaſily framed. Manifeſtos were publiſhed on both ſides, and hoſtilities commenced by the capture of ſome ſhips by the Baron de la Garde, and Leo Strozzi, on the coaſt of Flanders.

War with the emperor Charles V.

THIS war with the emperor proceeded upon the ſame neceſſary and laudable policy, to oppoſe the formidable power of the houſe of Auſtria, which Francis I. had ſtrenuouſly purſued; and though the ſcheme and conduct of it were too carefully digeſted and ſtudied by Henry, it anſwered this main political end, and proved in ſome reſpect advantageous to France. The proteſtant confederates, who had only applied to Henry for protection when induced by imminent danger, began to forget their engagements with him, as ſoon as they were extricated from their fears. Maurice liſtened to a treaty with the emperor, which was at laſt concluded at Paſſau, upon terms ſo favourable to the intereſt of the proteſtant princes, that they became the baſis of all their ſubſequent privileges *. The king of France was mentioned in it, in a manner which ſhewed the little account that was made of his honour and intereſt. His claims upon the emperor were to be repreſented in a memorial by the elector of Saxony. He even found it convenient to expreſs no diſſatisfaction, and immediately to lead back his army to the confines of France. The reduction of Damvilliers, Ivoy, and Bouillon, and ſome other towns in the province of Luxembourg, effected by him, compenſated the ravages made by the imperial troops in Champagne. But the addreſs he ſhewed in the beginning of the campaign, in poſſeſſing himſelf of Metz, Toul, and Verdun,

Metz Toul, and Verdun acquired by France.

* Matth. p. 91. P. Daniel, quart. edit. Tom. v. 481.

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Jealouſy between the duke of Guiſe and the conſtable.

THE diſplay of great abilities, and a different genius in the conduct of the military operations of this vigorous war, ſerved to heighten the emulation and jealouſy which had ſprung up between the duke of Guiſe and the conſtable. Their actions and characters being compared, their ſeveral partizans contended which of them had the greater ſhare of merit, and deſerved preferable favour and applauſe *. But fortune appeared to reſerve the choiceſt honours of valour for the duke of Guiſe, who being appointed to defend the city of Metz, which the emperor beſieged with an army of near a 100,000 men, was acknowledged to perform not only all that could be expected from his intrepid character, but, by the variety of his proviſional reſources and ſtratagems, to exceed whatever was then atchieved in that part of the military art. The preſervation of Metz, and the ruin of Charles's beſieging army, compoſed of the beſt troops of the empire, could not fail to render the duke of Guiſe's name illuſtrious, in a degree proportioned to the affront given to the fame and glory of the emperor, and the advantage and honour that accrued from it to France. It was not

Siege of Metz.

* D'Avila, ibid. Matthieu, p. 94.

indeed

indeed to Charles an adverſe blow of fortune ſo grievous or irreparable, as to impreſs him with gloomy apprehenſions and a diſguſt of the chances of war *, which ſome alledged to be the main motives of his ſubſequent reſolution to reſign the crown and dignity. Yet ſuch an unexpected and remarkable diſgrace to his victorious arms, may well be ſuppoſed to have matured this extraordinary purpoſe, which appears to have had its origin from a natural decline of the vigour of his ſpirits and conſtitution; a ſentiment of conſcious heroiſm and renown, mixed with ſome admiration of the religious patterns of kings and conquerors in a preceding age, alſo concurring with it.

Reſignation of the royal and imperial diadem by Charles V.

PHILIP II. the ſon and ſucceſſor of Charles in the Spaniſh monarchy, and his other hereditary dominions, now became the rival and opponent of Henry. As Philip inclined to ruminate upon the vaſt projects which the ſubtlety of his mind ſuggeſted to him in the cabinet, while the intricacy of them, as well as his own fears and jealouſy diſturbed or protracted their execution; he had got a five years truce with France propoſed, and almoſt adjuſted by the mediation of his conſort, Mary queen of England. But it was ſcarce poſſible this treaty could hold good, when the pope and king Philip were prepared to combat each other in Italy. Paul IV. † of the family of Caraff, at eighty years of age, engaged Henry to eſpouſe his quarrel, and enter into a league with him, not only to protect the holy ſee againſt the houſe of Auſtria, but alſo to attempt the recovery of the kingdom of Naples from the Spaniſh yoke. This was only a ſingle inſtance of many, which ſhewed how the greateſt princes ſuffered themſelves to be the dupes of the intereſted

War commenced with Philip II.

* Strada de Bello Belligico, lib. i. aux Caſtelnau, liv. vi.

† Matthieu, liv. 3. p. 153. Addit.

PART II. and variable ſchemes of a Roman pontiff tottering with years. In vain did the conſtable Montmorency oppoſe the propoſition for ſuch a league, made by the envoy from Rome, and ſhew that the poſture of affairs in Italy, and the pope's decrepid age, rendered it altogether hazardous and romantic. The duke and cardinal of Guiſe, who had ſtrengthened their intereſt with the ducheſs of Valentinois, by the marriage of their brother the duke d'Aumale with her daughter, were aſſiduous and importunate in perſuading the king to embrace the alliance. The point was at length carried. The conſtable acquieſced, from the hope of beholding his rivals baffled by their own ambitious projects: and the duke of Guiſe attained his aim by being nominated to command the army intended to aſſiſt the pope, and invade the kingdom of Naples. Incited by his own paſſion for glory in war, and beſet by the intrigues of the partizans of the pope, Henry heſitated to accept very advantageous propoſals of peace from the emperor Ferdinand and the king of Spain, and allowed himſelf to be hurried into the execution of this treaty with the court of Rome. The duke of Guiſe marched with the flower of the French troops into Italy, and inſtead of making Piedmont or the Milaneze the ſeat of war, where the French garriſons and forces under the command of the marſhal Briſſac were at hand to favour his enterprizes; he haſtened to take his ſtation near the city of Rome. He found no ſuch ſupplies of men or ammunition as the pope had ſtipulated by the articles of the league to provide; and in a ſhort time it became equally difficult to advance with ſafety upon the borders of Naples, or to retire with honour from the papal territory. In the mean time, while the Italian expedition was thus the favourite object of the court, and levies of money and troops were ſent to ſupply the exigencies of it; Philip, who was not yet departed from the Low Countries for Spain, had

 drawn

drawn together a formidable army, commanded by Emmanuel Philbert, duke of Savoy, one of the moſt experienced generals of of his time *. Gaſpard de Coligni, nephew to the conſtable, lately advanced to the rank of admiral of France, and eminent for his character in the army, had marched ſome forces from Picardy, to make a diverſion on the frontier of Flanders. He could only obſerve at a diſtance the motions of the duke of Savoy's army; which, after ſome counter-marches, turned toward Picardy, and inveſted the town of St. Quintin. It was very indifferently garriſoned, and the few troops it contained had ſcarce any officers of diſtinction to command them. Coligni, at the head of a choice body of horſe, attacked one of the enemy's poſts, and threw himſelf into it. The army which the conſtable Montmorency muſtered to oppoſe the enemy, did not amount to much above half their number. To reinforce St. Quintin with further ſuccours was the outmoſt he could attempt, and a ſcheme was laid for that purpoſe. In the execution of it, he unfortunately judged it neceſſary to march his whole army toward the town. Some unlucky accident retarded his retreat. He ſaw, too late, his error; which could not be remedied. The enemy attacked him in the moſt diſadvantageous ſituation. His troops were thrown into diſorder; which iſſued in the havock and total ruin of the whole army. The overthrow was not more diſmal to the old conſtable himſelf, who was wounded and taken priſoner, whilſt he fought in deſperation, that he might not outlive the diſgrace, than it ſeemed for ſome time fatal to the kingdom †. The terror that ſpread through France upon the tidings of the defeat at St. Quintin, was equal to that which was felt after the battle of Pavia; and the French hiſtorians reckon it amongſt the ſignal diſaſters of their monarchy.

Battle of St. Quintin.

* Brantome de Monſ. Chatillon. Matth. ibid. p. 168. † Thuan. lib. xix. p. 398.

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THE brave and ſpirited character of the French nation appeared by their behaviour upon this dangerous emergency. The officers of note who eſcaped from the battle, and thoſe that were poſted in different places of the frontier, collected what ſcattered troops they could into the neareſt garriſons. As it was of the utmoſt conſequence in the beginning of the conſternation to amuſe the enemy with the appearance of oppoſition, moſt of them acted with the cool and determined reſolution of men that knew without directions what their duty and the neceſſities of the ſtate required of them. Coligni the admiral, by defending St. Quintin againſt the attacks of the victorious army for ſeventeen days, when he could have no hopes of relief, gave a noble example of this laudable ſpirit *. The nobility every where obeyed the ſummons of the king to put themſelves in array; and levies of men haſtened from the different provinces, whilſt Philip, inſtead of directing his march to Paris, was occupied in reducing the Chatelet, Ham, and ſome other fortified places. But the general hope of protection and ſafety to the ſtate appeared to be placed on the duke of Guiſe's arrival in the kingdom. Many couriers had been diſpatched to require his immediate return with the army under his command in Italy †. The expedition he uſed in repaſſing the Alps; the number and condition of the troops he brought back with him, raiſed the ideas men had formerly conceived of his abilities as a general to the higheſt degree of admiration. The chief command of the army, with the title of lieutenant general, was preſently conferred upon him. As the Engliſh auxiliaries in the Spaniſh army demanded leave to return home, and the German mercenaries were

The duke of Guiſe marches from Italy into France.

* Thuan. ibid. Matthieu, p. 170.

† Brantome Eloge dei Duc de Guiſe. Thuan. lib. xx. p. 410.

ready

ready to mutiny about their pay, Philip had thought it eligible, after ſecuring the conqueſts he had made, to quit the field. This event, the moſt fortunate for the duke of Guiſe that could be wiſhed for, left him at full liberty to form his own plan of military enterprize, and to purſue it without danger of moleſtation from the enemy. After ſome conſultation, Calais was pitched upon as the place againſt which the blow could be leaſt ſuſpected to be aimed. The Engliſh, who had for a long courſe of time continued undiſturbed maſters of this fortreſs, were obſerved to pay little attention to the ſtate of the garriſon during the winter ſeaſon, when the marches and the ſwell of the tides rendered it almoſt inacceſſible. The admiral Coligni, ſome time before the battle of St. Quintin, had cauſed a plan of the fortification to be privately taken; and ſketched out a method for beſieging the place at this ſeaſon *. His papers afforded direction and aſſiſtance in conducting the preſent deſign. Before the Engliſh underſtood the rout of the French army, the out-works of Calais were attacked; and the duke of Guiſe in eight days had the glory of reſtoring to the crown of France this ſtrong hold, which the Engliſh had poſſeſſed for more than two hundred years, and made uſe of as their key of paſſage to that kingdom, during the long and frequent conteſts for empire that happened betwixt the two nations. The excluſion of the antient enemy of France from all footing in the kingdom; the reparation of the national loſs of intereſt and reputation by the defeat of St. Quintin, which attended the taking of Calais; the flattering hopes of greater ſucceſs, that people generally conceived upon this ſignal atchievement, rendered the duke of Guiſe the peculiar object of public praiſe. His name was every where repeated

Calais taken by him in eight days.

* Brantome, ibid. Matthieu, p. 180.

PART II. with tranſports of applauſe. The poets of the time poured forth the incenſe of their muſes upon him; whilſt freſh proofs of his military merit appeared to juſtify theſe encomiums.

1558. Mary queen of Scotland married to the Dauphin.

THE queen regent of Scotland, Mary of Guiſe, who had for ſeveral years ſupported the French intereſt in that kingdom, now obtained the conſent of the Scots for completing their antient alliance with France, by the marriage of her daughter the heireſs of the crown with Francis the Dauphin. Since the young princeſs, ten years before had been ſent to the court of France, and educated there with a view to this match, the concluſion of it was become as much a matter of neceſſity as of choice to the Scots *. The independency of their crown, which they had guarded with the utmoſt jealouſy, in a treaty of the ſame kind with the Engliſh, was in effect committed to the arbitration of the French; who, whilſt they had the cuſtody of Mary, could find little difficulty of preſcribing their own terms. Though the Scotch deputies who were appointed to aſſiſt at the nuptial ceremony, and ſign the marriage treaty, declared they had no commiſſion to promiſe the delivery of the enſigns of royalty to the Dauphin, and grant what in Scotland was called the matrimonial crown, yet in a ſhort time after, not only this point was yielded, but all the ſtipulations of the treaty were ratified by the ſtates of Scotland. As in caſe of male iſſue, the eldeſt ſon was to ſucceed to both crowns, the French had reaſon to rejoice in this proſpect of the acquiſition of a kingdom, which in their hands would prove an effectual ballance to the Engliſh power †. A prize ſo important the French court endeavoured to ſecure in another way, no leſs fallacious than diſhonourable. Mary was prevailed upon, ſome days before her

* Thuan. lib. 20. p. 416. Matthieu, p. 182. † P. Daniel, tom. v. p. 600.

nuptials,

nuptials, to ſubſcribe a formal deed, by which ſhe made a gift of the kingdom of Scotland to the Dauphin, and the kings of France his ſucceſſors, if ſhe happened to die without children. Her huſband Francis immediately took the title of king Dauphin, and quartered the arms of Scotland with his own. PART II.

In Scotland a conſiderable party had oppoſed this match, from a dread of entailing French influence, and all the ſuperſtitions of the popiſh ſyſtem of faith upon their country. In France it was not univerſally reliſhed. The chief objection * aroſe from the viſible pre-eminence it gave to the Guiſes in the affairs of government. Ever ſince the conſtable Montmorency's defeat and captivity at St. Quintin, they appeared to heap up laurels and honours without a rival. By their niece's marriage to the Dauphin, a ſignal acceſſion of intereſt and power was gained, which ſeemed to increaſe and rivet their authority, in a manner ſufficient to exerciſe juſt fears of their ambition, as well as envy of their exalted rank in the ſtate. Such peculiar advantages they might well expect to improve in the preſent conjuncture; when the conſtable's miſconduct ſtained his reputation, and his abſence from the court deprived him of all means of recovering his former credit with the king. But the meaſures they followed to ruin the intereſt of ſome of his kinſmen and friends, who were in favour at court, produced an effect which turned to the benefit of the conſtable.

As the king of Spain had particular reaſons to be deſirous of concluding a peace, Anthony Perronet, afterwards cardinal Granvel, his miniſter in the Low Countries, took occaſion in the courſe of

* Thuan. ibid. P. Daniel.

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Conference between the cardinal of Lorain and Perronet, biſhop of Arras, about terminating the war.

his conferences held at Peronne, about the diſpoſal of the young duke of Lorain in marriage to one of the daughters of France, to ſignify to the cardinal of Lorain, who was preſent at the negotiation, how much he thought it would redound to the honour and intereſt of both kings to put a period to the war. He alledged that whilſt they contended at ſo great expence of chriſtian blood to enlarge their dominions, the foundations of the catholic religion, which maintained thoſe of royalty, were allowed to be ſubverted by the growth and prevalence of hereſy *. He ſaid that it was well known what progreſs this peſtilential evil made in France; and though the factions and broils it would produce in that kingdom might be advantageous to Spain, it was to be feared the Low Countries would catch the contagion. He added, that it was underſtood at the court of Spain, that Coligni and his brother D'Andelot were become apoſtates from the faith, of which the blaſphemous ſpeeches of the latter amongſt the ſoldiers, and his intercepted epiſtles were flagrant proofs; and that thoſe men being the conſtable's kindred, and the principal ſupport of his party, which always thwarted the intereſt and advancement of the Guiſes, might now be expoſed in their true colours; and, as Montmorency's captivity afforded the faireſt occaſion for puniſhing them with deſerved contempt and diſgrace, ſo it invited the Guiſes to be mediators of a peace, that by the favour of it, and the concurrence of the catholic king, they might make the extinction of Henry in France their particular atchievement and glory. The cardinal of Lorain needed no further perſuaſion to enter into the views of the Spaniſh miniſter, which appeared ſo conformable to the intereſt of his family. He acquainted Henry with the ſubſtance of this con-

* Matthieu, liv. iii. p. 186. Thuan. let. xx. p. 416.

ference, who, alarmed about the increaſe of hereſy, was ſoon diſpoſed to reflect on the neceſſity of peace. The ducheſs of Valentinois, who aſpired to the honour of being a jealous ſuppreſſor of hereſy, was an advocate for it; but the offence ſhe took at the cardinal of Lorain's forward manners with the king made her recommend the conſtable as the fitteſt perſon to negotiate the treaty *. Upon being adviſed of this by his friends at court, the conſtable applied to the duke of Savoy, and by his means obtained the king of Spain's permiſſion to go to the French camp upon the Somme, and propoſe to Henry a conference about the peace. The king, upon his arrival, recalled all his wonted favourable impreſſions of his old companion and counſellor; he went out to receive and embrace him, and made him paſs the night in his tent. The Guiſes had reaſon to be jealous, when they ſaw thoſe outward marks of the king's regard to Montmorency, confirmed by the marriage of the grand daughter of the ducheſs of Valentinois, to Henry Damville, the conſtable's ſecond ſon.

THE conferences about the peace, which were opened at the abbey of Cercamp in Cambreſis, were for ſome time interrupted by endleſs diſputes concerning the reſtitution of places during the war. The death of Mary queen of England, and the advancement of Elizabeth to the throne, kept the two kings in ſuſpence; and according to the different views and expectations they had from this event, multiplied the objection and difficulties on both ſides †. It was determined in the king's council, that the Scotch queen ſhould aſſume the title of queen of England, and bear the arms of that kingdom, together with thoſe of Scotland and France,

* Thuan. let. xx. p. 416. † Memoires des Caſtelnau, liv. ii. p. 34. Thuan. ibid. Matth. ibid. p. 193.

PART II. A variety of freſh conteſts thus engendered, ſeemed to portend nothing but a more general war. But when it ſoon appeared that Elizabeth, however ſhe might dread a competitor, could well maintain her crown and dignity; the negotiations were renewed. As the reſtoring of Calais to the Engliſh, which furniſhed the principal ſubject of diſſenſion, was now become a matter of leſs concern to Philip when his connexion with England was broke off; a ſeparate treaty began to be ſet on foot between Elizabeth and Henry. It was agreed that Calais ſhould be left in the hands of the French king for eight years, at the end of which term he was bound to deliver it up to the Engliſh; or in caſe he delayed or refuſed to fulfil this engagement, to pay the Engliſh the ſum of five hundred thouſand crowns. If Elizabeth, during that period, ſhould violate the treaty of peace, the king of France was diſcharged of the obligation to pay this forfeiture. It required not much penetration to perceive that Elizabeth in this tranſaction endeavoured only to ſave her own honour, and amuſe the people of England with a proſpect of the recovery of Calais, while ſhe made an actual reſignation of it to France. The point ſhe gained by this conceſſion was very important, peace in the beginning of her reign, and the repreſſion of party ſpirit.

April, 1558. THE concluſion of the treaty of peace with Spain immediately followed that with England *. In general it was allowed, that the towns and places taken on both ſides ſhould be reſtored. The number of theſe reduced by France, in Flanders as well as Italy, much exceeded the acquiſitions made by the Spaniards. This raiſed loud complaints in France, of the ſhameful inequality of the

Peace of Chateau Cambreſis.

* D'Aubigne, fol. edit. tom. i. liv. i. chap. 18. Thuan. lib. xxii. p. 457. P. Daniel, p. 618.

conditions,

conditions. When all the towns, fortreſſes and garriſons, which the French gave up to the duke of Savoy and the Genoeſe, were reckoned together, with thoſe yielded to Philip in the Netherlands; it was ſaid, that more than an hundred places were exchanged for St. Quintin, Ham and the Chatelet. But, beſides that Henry reſerved his rights upon Savoy, and kept poſſeſſion of ſeveral important towns, until his pretenſions were examined by commiſſioners, it is certain that many of thoſe Italian conqueſts were a liſt of trifling poſts rather than places of conſequence, which changed maſters at the iſſue of every battle, and could never be retained without an army in the field, or one near at hand to protect them. It cannot be ſaid, indeed, that the character of able negotiators, which ever ſince has been generally ſuppoſed to belong to the French, was vouched at this famous treaty. Yet the hold they got of Calais, and the poſſeſſion of Metz, Toul and Verdun, which the emperor Ferdinand in a manner transferred to them, may be conſidered as gratuities, almoſt ſufficient to balance all their material loſſes. Henry's daughter, Iſabella, who had been promiſed to Charles, prince of Spain, was contracted in marriage to his father Philip; and his ſiſter Margaret to Emmanuel Philbert, duke of Savoy.

Alliance of the family of Bourbon with the houſe of Navarre.

It is remarked that the eager deſire of both kings to interpoſe in defence of the catholic faith, endangered by the attacks of hereticks, had prevailed with them to precipitate the determination of many intereſting points of the treaty, and overlook others attended with difficulty*. Of this, the concern the French nation had to vindicate the rights of the houſe of Albert to the kingdom of

* D'Aubigne, ibid.

Navarre,

PART II. Navarre, affords an inſtance, which requires to be more particularly explained. Ferdinand the Catholic, who founded the grandeur of the Spaniſh monarch, amongſt other ſtrokes of ambition and policy by which he is characterized, had performed a memorable one by obliging John D'Albert to fly his kingdom of Navarre, becauſe he did not immediately grant his army a free paſſage through his dominions when he deſigned to invade France *. Having made himſelf maſter of Navarre, Ferdinand, under the ſanction of the pontifical authority, uſurped the ſovereignty of it. Julius II. the inveterate enemy of France, iſſued a bull of excommunication againſt D'Albret, as a favourer of the council of Piſa, and an ally of Lewis XII. who waged war with the holy ſee. The exiled king implored the relief of France, in whoſe cauſe he had ſuffered. But Lewis, embarraſſed with the ſituation of his affairs, could afford him no effectual ſuccour. After the death of John D'Albert, his ſon Henry, the heir of his title, and reverſed fortune, continued to ſolicit the court of France † for redreſs. The merit of his character and perſonal virtues concurred with the motives of honour and intereſt to engage the French to act vigorouſly for the recovery of his kingdom. Francis gave him his ſiſter Margaret in marriage, and in the beginning of his reign endeavoured by negotiation and force of arms to reinſtate him in his dominions. But the conqueſt of Milan, which was too much the ſole object of this prince's enterprizes, diverted him from proſecuting the reduction of Navarre; till the opportunity which the revolt of ſome Spaniſh grandees at the acceſſion of Charles V. rendered favourable, was loſt; and by the riſing fortune of that monarch, became irrecoverable ‡. Jane D'Albret, the

* Thuan. lib. i. p. 2. † Ibid. liv. xvi. p. 338. ‡ Matthieu, liv. iii. p. 117. P. Daniel, p. 613.

daughter

daughter and only progeny of the king of Navarre, was afterward in Henry II.'s reign married to Anthony of Bourbon, duke of Vendoſme, and firſt prince of the blood. But notwithſtanding this match ſeemed to bind the court of France more cloſely to maintain the rights of the royal family of Navarre; there was ſmall regard or attention paid to them at the time of the treaty. When the conferences were firſt opened, the reſtitution of Navarre was made a topic of declamation that ſerved as a counterpart to the high demands of the Spaniſh miniſters; but the mention of it was ſoon dropped, and even the form of inſerting an article relative to it in the treaty overlooked, or never inſiſted on. Anthony of Bourbon, who ſucceeded to the title of king of Navarre, was not only mortified with this neglect of his intereſt, but as if it had been the ſcheme of the court to bury his claim in oblivion; a propoſal was made in the king's name, that he ſhould give up the ſeigniory of Bearn, and the ſmall portion of territory which the Spaniards had not ſeized upon, in exchange for other lands in France. To ſhun importunity about the ungracious propoſal, Anthony withdrew from court with his queen; and Henry, as a mark of his diſpleaſure againſt him, disjoined Languedoc from the government of Guienne, which he held as firſt prince of the blood, and beſtowed it on the conſtable.

THOUGH the bulk of the nation had reaſon to be weary of the burdens of a long and expenſive war, the terms of peace were generally condemned as equally repugnant to the honour and intereſt of France. Loud complaints were raiſed againſt the conſtable, who, cautious as he had been to get the cardinal of Lorain and three other commiſſioners joined with him in the negotiations, was believed to be the chief adviſer and director of the whole ſcheme of the treaty.

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treaty *. It was even ſaid that the inglorious peace was the price king Henry paid for his ranſom; which therefore might be reckoned more coſtly to the kingdom than that of Francis I. This was evidently the extravagant language of party, induſtriouſly thrown out to calumniate the conſtable, and which having its effect, rendered his counſel and influence leſs powerful than otherwiſe they might have proved, at a time when the Guiſes graſped the reins of government. But the proteſtants had reaſon to dread the motives which induced the two monarchs and their miniſters to conclude the peace of Chateau Cambreſis †. Beſides its being an article of the treaty, that both ſhould contribute their utmoſt endeavours to reſtore peace to the catholic church, and terminate all the religious diſſenſions, by procuring the re-aſſembly of a general council; there was ground to believe, that the cardinal of Lorain and the biſhop of Arras had entered into more particular ſtipulations upon the ſubject, by engaging to inflame the zeal of the kings their maſters for the abolition of hereſy. As the differences in religion concurred to form and diverſify the characters of the party leaders already mentioned, and produced the moſt intereſting events in the hiſtory of France for a period of thirty years; it is neceſſary, for the illuſtration of the following tract of hiſtory, to conſider what encouragement was given to the new opinions in matters of faith by the eccleſiaſtical conſtitutions of the kingdom, and the prevailing taſte of the age; and how far the meaſures of the civil government proved a ſuitable or efficacious remedy for the diſorders apprehended from them.

* Thuan. lib. xxii. p. 463.

† D'Aubigne, liv. i. chap. 18.

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SECT. II.

Eccleſiaſtical affairs of France—Antient diſputes about the authority of the ſee of Rome—The pragmatic ſanction—The concordat—Perſecutions of the proteſtant converts under Francis I. *and Henry* II. *Character of ſome favourers of the reformation—Its origin and progreſs among men of letters—Henry's reſentment of the ſpeeches of ſome counſellors of the parliament—His death.*

THE unſettled ſtate of kingdoms, the indefinite privileges of ſovereignty, the want and inſufficiency of political and civil conſtitutions, and the rudeneſs and incapacity of the Gothic nations in manners and literature, were circumſtances which conſpired to form the hierarchy, and extend the ſpiritual domination of the church of Rome. The eccleſiaſtical authority became the only baſis of the political ſyſtem *; and the greateſt and wiſeſt princes found it neceſſary to employ the pontifical power, and the influence of the clerical order in ſupport of the civil adminiſtration. The decretals and canons which iſſued from the apoſtolic ſee, were regarded as fountains of law; and the juriſdiction of the biſhops and the principal eccleſiaſtics, who alone pretended to interpret them, were allowed to exceed all limitations. It is not to be wondered that the popes aſſumed the prerogative of diſpoſing of crowns and ſcepters; when the biſhops every where acted as the arbiters of right and juſtice, and the kings ſeldom preſumed to decide important controverſies without an application to the court of Rome, or conſulting with councils of the clergy. As the civil

* Paſquier, liv. iii. chap. 14. L'Eſprit des Loix, liv. xxxi. chap. 19. Le Gendre, p. 8.

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eſtabliſhments acquired greater ſtability, and more regular conſtitutions of the ſtate confirmed the authority of princes; things could not always remain in this ſituation. A conflict aroſe betwixt the two claſhing powers. Kings aſſerted their rights with more boldneſs than efficacy. But one conteſt with the papal power engendered, and gave additional force to another, till at length reiterated oppoſition ſet bounds to the enormous uſurpations of the biſhops, and the tyranny of the ſovereign pontiff.

Oppoſition to the papal power by Philip-le-bel.

THE kings of France when emperors, and after they ceaſed to hold the imperial diadem, like other princes, had felt the curb of Rome, without making any conſiderable attempt to reſiſt it, till the reign of Philip IV. ſurnamed the Fair *. This prince having quarrelled with Boniface VIII. and a bull of excommunication being publiſhed againſt him, he aſſembled the ſtates of the kingdom, and obtained a declaration from them of their abhorrence of this attack upon the privileges of his crown and ſovereignty, and of their reſolutions to reſent to the utmoſt the indignity offered him, who in temporals was their only liege lord and ſuperior. Though the clerical order were perplexed and intimidated with apprehenſions of a breach with the holy ſee, the nobility, without ſcruple or dread, aſſerted the independency of the kingdom on the juriſdiction of Rome; and the third eſtate further declared, that pope Boniface erred manifeſtly, and had committed a mortal ſin in pretending to a ſovereignty in temporals, and that the king had no right to beſtow prebendaries, or enjoy the revenues of vacant cathedral churches. The royal privilege, called the *regale*, had been from the earlieſt times of the monarchy known in France †. It is a right the kings had to enjoy the revenues of biſhoprics, and

* Boulainvilliers, let. 7. Henault, p. 181. † Paſquier, ibid. chap. 25.

other

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Diſputes about the regale.

other conſiſtorial benefices when they became vacant, and to preſent to the prebendaries and other eccleſiaſtic offices dependent on them, until a regular ſupply and ſucceſſion to thoſe church dignities took place. This privilege, inſtead of being a ſtretch of royal authority, was only the veſtige of a higher prerogative exerciſed by the kings of the Merovingian race, who often conferred biſhoprics by their own authority. But, as the Roman pontiffs did not permit this diminution of their grandeur to continue, the *regale* became equally odious to them; for the condemnation of which, they diſcovered this ſpecious pretext, that many biſhoprics were united to the crown of France, which had never been governed by ſuch a regulation *. However, by means of national aſſemblies of the clergy, as well as by acts of ſovereign power, the kings of France endeavoured to maintain the regale, in all benefices of royal foundation; while many of the clergy, ſupported by the court of parliament and the univerſity of Paris, inſiſted to have the primitive freedom of the church with reſpect to epiſcopal elections reſtored.

When the ſeat of the pontificate was changed from Rome to Avignon in France, various popes contended for the validity of their ſeveral elections at the ſame time, and thundered excommunications againſt each other. The emperors and kings ſought a remedy for thoſe confuſions in general councils of the church, and oppoſed the authority of thoſe aſſemblies to that of the papal tyranny. The councils of Conſtance and that of Baſil were held. The decrees of the latter were called to check the deſpotiſm of the popes, and correct a number of inſufferable abuſes in the government and diſcipline of the church †. The clergy of France, who

* Paſquier, ibid.

† Henault, p. 250.

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complained that the reſidence of the popes at Avignon had multiplied the corruptions and diſorders of their eccleſiaſtical ſyſtem, applied to Charles VII. to lend his authority for the rectification of them. A council of the clergy, and a meeting of the great lords of the kingdom was appointed at Bourges, in which the celebrated eccleſiaſtical law, called the *pragmatic ſanction*, was ratified. By it the * right of the clergy to make elections to benefices was declared and confirmed, the payment of annates or firſt-fruits out of the vacant benefices, and other pecuniary exactions, which the popes claimed as due to the holy ſee, were aboliſhed. Being a tranſcript of the decrees of council of Baſil, it was looked upon as ſtamped with the authority of the church univerſal; and being framed upon theſe general principles of liberty, which had been reckoned to be inherent in the Gallican church, it was eſteemed and revered as the charter of its ſacred privileges. The numberleſs diſputes with the court of Rome for ſeveral ages before, had produced only a ſeries of temporary expedients, adapted to particular caſes, which were never reduced to any conſtitutional rule in the kingdom.

Eccleſiaſtical law, called the pragmatic ſanction.

LEWIS XI. who laboured to new model every thing in the ſtate and kingdom, agreed with Pius II. to revoke the pragmatic ſanction; but his project being generally diſagreeable to the kingdom, remained unexecuted †. It was maintained by Charles VIII. and Lewis XII. in a manner that was deemed little leſs than ſchiſmatical by the court of Rome; and the controverſy which the laſt of theſe monarchs had with Julius II. came to ſuch extremity, that in the Lateran council, which that haughty Pontiff had aſſembled in oppoſition to that of Piſa, an interdict was publiſhed againſt the

* Thuan. lib. viii. p. 165. † Ibid. Matthieu, liv. i. p. 16. ibid. p. 49.

kingdom of France; and the king, the prelates and parliaments were ſummoned to appear before the pope, and give their reaſons why the pragmatic ſanction ſhould not be aboliſhed.

To prevent the continual broils with the court of Rome, which the pragmatic ſanction occaſioned, Francis I. by the advice of his chancellor Du Prat, treated with Leo X. for ſubſtituting another conſtitution in its place, which was called the *concordat*. By the tenour of it, the king obtained the nomination to all the great benefices in France; and the pope was allowed the annates or firſt fruits of them in every vacancy *. Though this was only an equivalent given by the crown for the right which the holy ſee contended; and the king had it in his power to make uſe of his right of preſenting, or to preſerve the privilege of election in the collegiate churches, a moſt general oppoſition aroſe to the new regulation. The courts of parliament, the univerſities, and a great number of the clergy united their complaints and remonſtrances againſt this innovation. Public aſſociations were entered into, and ſolemn vows were made never to ſubmit to the concordat. The royal authority, for a long time, proved inſufficient to enforce obedience to it.

The concordat, a different law ſubſtituted in its room.

Such was the ſtate of the Gallic church when the religious opinions of Luther and his followers were ſucceſsfully propagated in the free cities of Germany, and other neighbouring ſtates. France, long animated by a ſpirit of controverſy with the ſee of Rome, jealous of her own kings with reſpect to her eccleſiaſtical privileges, the theatre of erudition and literary improvements ſeemed to be withheld by no reſtraint, but that of her civil govern-

Commencement of the reformation.

* P. Daniel, ibid. p. 52.

ment,

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ment, from reliſhing and admitting that freedom of ſentiment in religion, by which the principles of the reformed faith were diſtinguiſhed. In the pontificate of Leo X. that æra ſo celebrated for the revival and growth of learning and arts, when the city of Rome produced again new monuments of her antient genius; the exceſſive ſuperſtitions of the church, and the toleration and increaſe of eccleſiaſtical abuſes, were carried to ſuch a pitch that ſhocked the improved ſenſe and taſte of the intelligent part of mankind. The ſpirit of enquiry being once awaked, the theſis's of Luther gained more general credit and reputation.

FRANCIS himſelf was the patron of literature, and vied with Leo X. in rewarding the proficients in ſcience *. The encouragement and favour which all men of learning found at his court is reckoned by Strada and others one principal ſource by which the hereſy of Luther was conveyed into France. Certain it is, that the king's ſiſter, Margaret, whoſe marriage with the king of Navarre had forwarded her propenſity to the new doctrines, not only retained in her court ſeveral of the ableſt proteſtant divines †, but perſuaded her brother Francis to invite Philip Melancthon to a conference upon the different points of religious controverſy. The juſt character ſhe gave of this reformer, who was averſe to violence, and capable of moderating the aſperity of religious debate, rendered the propoſal agreeable to Francis, until the cardinal of Tournon repreſented it to him as diſhonourable to the catholic faith. Beſides Francis's taſte for ſcience, and his diſpoſition to encourage letters, which generally liberate the mind from bigotry; he had ſome political inducements to exerciſe lenity in matters of religion.

* Strada, liv. iii. P. Daniel, p. 435. Brantome Eloge de Regne. P. Daniel. ibid.

† Matthieu, liv i. p. 21.

Charles V. his antagoniſt, who endeavoured to aggrandize his houſe by ſubverting the liberties of the Germanic body, had the proteſtant princes for his chief enemies. Francis correſponded with them as friends and allies, received recruits to his armies from them, and at the ſame time gave no quarter to thoſe in his kingdom who embraced their religious opinions. His conduct weakened his influence in Germany, and gave Charles an opportunity to upbraid his envoys, who came to manage their maſter's intereſt with the proteſtants there, that he made no ſcruple to burn them alive in France, who bore the chriſtian name, while he entertained the ambaſſadors of the Turk at his court.

Francis I. againſt arguments from policy, allows no toleration.

BUT notwithſtanding the principles of eccleſiaſtical liberty and oppoſition to the papal tyranny, ſo often avowed and boaſted of in France, and the neceſſity of ſoliciting the friendſhip of foreign proteſtants, and the king's connexion with the houſe of Navarre; the preſervation of the uniform profeſſion of the catholic faith was deemed by Francis of more importance to the honour and felicity of the kingdom, than all thoſe particular conſiderations. Though the horrible appearance of the ſect of the anabaptiſts in Munſter might well form a ſtrong prejudice againſt religious innovations, and cauſe a dread of their conſequences in any monarchy or regular government; we ought not to imagine that the principle of burning and deſtroying heretics adopted in France was founded in a hatred of their opinions as hurtful to ſociety, or in political apprehenſions of the prevalence of religious ſectaries. In the dark ages of Gothick barbarity, the inhuman principle had been foſtered by the church of Rome, and effectually communicated alongſt with her creed to the world, which implicitly ſubmitted to her ſpiritual ſway *. Europe had long learned to be militant in the cauſe of

* D'Aubigne, liv. ii. chap. 7.

faith

PART II. faith and the church. The ſpirit of *croiſading* had been converted into a zeal for the perſecution of hereſy. The example of the greateſt princes, who had waged this holy war, recommended it to their ſucceſſors; and the eſtabliſhment of chivalry, which was a religious inſtitution, rendered it, among inferior ranks of men, the moſt honourable profeſſion.

IT was, without doubt, this predominant zeal againſt hereſy which Francis believed to be inſeparable from his religion that proved a principal motive to him and his miniſters to undertake the office of inquiſitors, and devote to the moſt barbarous puniſhment all who were diſcovered to vary in their ſentiments from the received ſyſtem of faith *. Some billets being found paſted upon the walls of the Louvre, which reflected upon the maſs; the inſult was charged upon the proteſtants. The court diſcovered the higheſt indignation; and by an order from Francis, the maſs was carried in ſolemn pomp through the ſtreets of the city. He came from Paris to aſſiſt in perſon at the religious ceremony. Surrounded by the princes of the blood, and the grandees of his court, he marched in the holy train, bearing a flambeau in his hand; and was heard to declare aloud, that he would ſooner cut off his right arm than ſuffer the leaſt vein of hereſy about him; and that if his own children were tainted with it they ſhould not be ſpared. Catholic hiſtorians, who have wrote in later and more moderate times †, relate the appearance and ſpeech which Francis made on this occaſion, with an air of ſatisfaction and triumph. It may therefore be leſs wondered, than in an age of prejudice and bigotry, ſuch fervent expreſſions of zeal would be thought altogether

Teſtimony of his religious zeal.

* Matthieu, ibid. p. 21.

† P. Daniel, p. 303.

worthy

worthy of a king, the head of a catholic ſtate, whoſe reputation and glory depended as much on his teſtifying himſelf a true champion for the faith as on the moſt illuſtrious actions.

WHEN the zeal of the court was kindled in this manner, any ſuppoſed apoſtaſy from the faith was as much liable to be puniſhed as the moſt offenſive behaviour of the apoſtates. The wiſer emperors of heathen Rome in their *reſcripts* to the proconſuls, forbid the perſecution of chriſtianity, unleſs the commiſſion of a civil crime accompanied the profeſſion of it. The principles of the catholic faith admitted of no ſuch diſtinction. It was the profeſſed maxim and rule of the church to make inquiſition for heretics. The office or court of inquiſition had been for a long time founded at Rome; and * though this ghoſtly tribunal was not permitted in France, there was one commiſſioned by the pope, who bore the title of inquiſitor of the faith, whoſe buſineſs it was to give information to the ordinary courts and magiſtrates againſt thoſe ſuſpected of hereſy, and to report to the court of Rome what diligence was uſed in the proſecutions for this crime. Thus proſcribed by the laws, and abhorred for their impiety, as the converts to the reformed faith were, their behaviour as ſubjects or citizens was not canvaſſed in the proceſſes carried on againſt them. The beſt defence that could have been offered for them on that head, availed not to mitigate the ſeverity of the penal ſtatutes. The innocence and ſimplicity of the inhabitants of Mirandol, and the villages around it, in the boundary of Provence, exempted them not from the charge of hereſy, or proved any alleviation of the heinous nature of this imputed crime. Thoſe poor and virtuous people †,

The inhabitants of Mirandol proſecuted with fire and ſword.

* Thuan. lib. vi. p. 127. P. Daniel, p. 653.

† Thuan. ibid.

PART II. who were deſcended of the antient Vaudois, and like them, for a long time had no prieſts, but ſuch as were elected by themſelves to teach them the religious creed of their forefathers, were ſummoned by the parliament of Aix to abjure their heretical opinions. Having learned from ſome proteſtant miniſters lately come amongſt them the danger of ſiſting themſelves at the bar of an inexorable court, they ſhunned a compearance. An arret for contumacy paſſed againſt them in the parliament, which adjudged the heads of families to be burnt alive, all their effects to be confiſcated; their woods to be cut down, and their houſes to be demoliſhed. The execution of this ferocious ſentence was for ſome time deferred. But D'Oppede, the firſt preſident of the parliament of Aix, and Guerin, the king's attorney general in Provence, who had private reaſons for repreſenting them at court as a dangerous race of people, at length obtained an order to make them examples of legal vengeance. Two and twenty villages were laid entirely waſte; many hundreds of the defenceleſs multitude were butchered or ſacrificed to the flames, and the reſt driven out to beggary and famine: the general conſternation of the people; the immediate deſertion of the villages, and the eaſy prey made by the ſoldiers of the diſmal rout of men, women and children, ſhewed, in ſpite of the aſſertions of their enemies, that they had neither the deſign nor capacity of reſiſtance. The outrage appeared from the very narrative itſelf; and its inhuman perpetrators being, in the following reign, impeached before the parliament of Paris, Guerin was condemned to loſe his head.

ALTHOUGH, in the beginning of the ſixteenth century, the church of Rome ſtill maintained its empire, in almoſt all the great kingdoms of the continent of Europe, and ſeemed to have no reaſon

reaſon to dread a diminution of its ſpiritual authority, ſupported from the eſtabliſhed opinion of mankind, and ſtrongeſt ties of religion and policy; yet the ſudden conteſts and ſchiſms excited by Luther, and the few monks that followed him in Germany, manifeſtly diſcovered the diſpoſition of many princes and ſtates to quarrel with the papal power, and renounce their allegiance to Rome. The popes ſtill held unſlacked the ſame reins of abſolute dominion; and in their methods of quelling religious diſputes, as well as in particular controverſies with princes, they uſed that fulminating tone, with which they terrified the darker ages. When ſeveral circles and free cities of the empire were become proteſtants, Lutheraniſm began to be embraced in Sweden and Denmark, and England, was about throwing off the ſupremacy of Rome *; Clement VII. perſiſted, in eluding the demands that the emperor of Germany and other catholic princes had made of a general council. Before Luther appeared, the reformation of the uſages and diſcipline of the catholic church was become a point too ſerious and intereſting to be diſpenſed with in many kingdoms †. The proteſtant reformers were not the firſt that wrote invectives againſt the ſhameful ignorance and corruptions of the clergy, the ſimoniacal practices of the court of Rome, and the palpable diſſolution of eccleſiaſtical order and government. It is well known that many catholic authors led the way to the ſevereſt animadverſions on the licenſed irregularities of the ſee of Rome. The call to reform the head, together with the other members of the catholic body, was heard as much within as without the pale of the church. The neceſſity of amendment was acknowledged by the popes, but they dreaded the experiment of a general council. At length Paul III.

A demand made by ſeveral princes for a general council.

Paul III. iſſues his bulls for holding one.

* D'Aubigne, liv. i. chap. 13. P. Daniel, p. 426.

† Hiſtoria Papalus.

PART II. three years after he assumed the purple, 1537, issued his mandate for holding one in the city of Mantua. But after being transferred and often adjourned for a course of nine years, on account of some real and many pretended impediments, it assembled in the month of January at Trent, a town situated on the confines of Italy and Germany. The protestant princes of the empire and other communities had by this time abandoned all thoughts of trusting to the decisions of this long expected council. Their differences with the emperor Charles V. both with respect to civil and religious privileges, required to be discussed in another form, and they had reason to be convinced that a compromise about religion might in time be obtained from the secular councils of the empire, which would never be gained by a clerical assembly.

Limitations of the pontifical authority, expressed in the registers of the parliament.

THE establishment of the concordat did not supersede the use of other constitutional limitations of the pontifical authority in France. The parliament of Paris was attentive to preserve a kind of public record of the ecclesiastical rights of the crown and kingdom. The apostolic brief or commission which the legate appointed by the pope brought with him, at the time of Henry's accession to the throne, was received and entered into the register of the parliament, under special reservation of all the royal and civil privileges of the nation. It was declared to imply no temporal jurisdiction over any of the king's subjects, those of the clerical order not excepted; to infer no legal power of condemning or absolving delinquents, further than what served as a directory to conscience, and the appointment of penance, and to derogate in nothing from the authority of the sacred canons, that of general councils, and the rights and immunities of the Gallican church *. De Thou, in the

* Thuan. lib. iii. p. 59.

copy

copy he gives of thoſe reſtrictions, has ſpecified all the particular caſes to which they were underſtood by the court of parliament to extend.

THE political views and engagements of Henry II. to controul the dominion of the houſe of Auſtria, by ſupporting the league of the proteſtant princes againſt the emperor, were not only conformable to thoſe of his predeceſſors, but even required a cloſer union with that party which contended for the liberties of the Germanic body; in proportion to the increaſing ſucceſs and ſuperiority of Charles V. Julius III. * the ſucceſſor of Paul III. in the papal chair, had alſo thrown himſelf into the emperor's party in Italy, that he might be enabled to reſume by his aſſiſtance the towns of Parma and Placentia, which were held by Octavio Tarneſe, grandſon to Paul III. who endeavoured to avoid the danger by ſeeking the protection of France. Henry, highly provoked with the turbulent and partial conduct of the pope, reſolved to keep no terms of amity with the court of Rome. He publiſhed an edict which made it death and confiſcation of goods to remit money thither on any pretence †. The attendance of the French biſhops on the council of Trent was reſtrained; and when Amiot, abbot of Bellozane, appeared there as the king's envoy to intimate the juſt ground of offence the pope had given his maſter; his commiſſion allowed him to addreſs that aſſembly with no more reſpectful title than that of the convention. The king's letter to the council bore the ſame inſcription, and the envoy's ſpeech, beſides arraigning the behaviour of Julius, was a recital of thoſe paſſages of hiſtory, which ſhewed that the kings of France had always watched over the preſervation

Reſentment of Henry II. againſt pope Julius III.

* D' Aubigne, liv. i. chap. 3.

† Thuan. lib. viii. p. 166.

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of the chriſtian church, and were incited by their own honour and the general voice of the French nation, to act as the guardians of her privileges, without being intimidated by the vain menaces of the court of Rome, by whoſe ambition they had been often violated.

Henry contends for the liberties of the Gallican church,

SUCH inſtances of quarrel and diſſenſion with Rome, which were always accompanied with public declarations of the independent conſtitution and liberty of the Gallican church, had a direct tendency to render the principles and language of eccleſiaſtical freedom acceptable and familiar in France. The bold and cenſorious ſtile, which the court aſſumed on thoſe occaſions, could not readily be diſtinguiſhed from that of ſchiſm. But Henry took care to teach apoſtates from the church to underſtand the diſtinction, and to ſhew himſelf to his people the ſevere avenger of heretical impiety. At the ſame time that war was denounced againſt the pope, a * more rigorous edict than any in the former reign was publiſhed at Chateau-Brand, for the perſecution and puniſhment of heretics, the terrible doom pronounced, and the tortures inflicted upon thoſe who were found guilty, aided the conceptions of the vulgar with reſpect to their crime. The groſſeſt fictions about the articles of faith; the moſt hideous reports of infernal rites and practices performed in their ſecret places of worſhip, were currently believed; and ſometimes atteſted as undoubted fact by witneſſes examined before the magiſtrate. The court forbore any exact or regular enquiry; and taking advantage of this favourable tide of the popular opinion, appointed thoſe religious proceſſions to be made, by which it was uſual to ſtop the plague, and avert witchcraft, and then ordered ſome ſhocking executions.

and perſecutes the proteſtants with ſeverity.

NOTWITHSTANDING the proteſtant opinions were thus ſtigmatized, and puniſhed with the utmoſt rigour and infamy in the

* Thuan. ibid. P. Daniel, p. 653.

perſons

perſons of thoſe who profeſſed them; neither the original and firſt appearance of thoſe religious innovations, nor the characters of the principal men who eſpouſed them in France had ſuch an ungracious aſpect, as to become a proper apology for the deteſtation and ſeverities exerciſed againſt them. The tenets of the reformed faith were early known to have obtained the ſuffrage and protection of the family and court of Navarre *. Gerard Rouſſell was the partizan of the new ſect, and the favourite of the royal family; a man whom the catholic hiſtorians, while they cautiouſly trace the lines of his character, allow to have given ſuch indications of a pious and virtuous mind, as were worthy of a chriſtian biſhop in the purer ages of the church. Regular in life and manners, diſintereſted, beneficent, and capable of purſuing the dictates of religion, without the impulſe of intemperate zeal; he neither idolized the ſyſtematical doctrines of Luther, Zuinglius or Calvin; but admitting them as laudable efforts for the revival of the primitive doctrines of chriſtianity, he ſtudied to exemplify as well as to teach theſe truths, by employing the revenues of the biſhopric of Oleron, which the queen of Navarre's intereſt with her brother Francis I. had procured for him, in the charitable relief of the poor and indigent, and the pious and literary education of youth. Whether Briconnel, the biſhop of Meaux, who ſought an intimacy and correſpondence with Rouſſell and others of his perſuaſion, was only ſuſpected on that account to have encouraged the growth of the proteſtant opinions in his dioceſe, which was remarkable, or actually gave them his ſecret patronage, as his proceſs before the court of parliament ſeemed to imply, may be left to be diſcuſſed by thoſe who chuſe

Character of Gerard Rouſſel, and other favourers of the reformation.

* Brantome Eloge de Monlice. P. Daniel, p. 650.

the

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the gleanings of hiſtorical controverſy *. It will be allowed that he was not the only French biſhop that was publicly charged with having a biaſs to the new doctrines, and that the names of the moſt eminent of that order of men, did not equal thoſe of Budæus, Vatabler, Du Chatel, Stephanus, Eraſmus, and others, with whom the doctors of the Sorbonne were never reconciled; and whoſe merit and literary fame, more than their catholic orthodoxy, recommended to honourable employments in the court of Francis I.

Calvin's character as a writer.

In many quarters of the kingdom, the principles of the proteſtant faith ripened vigorouſly in the minds of people, before Calvin made himſelf known to the world. The publication of his works evading the menaces of the parliamentary edicts, reinforced the revolt from the eſtabliſhed ſyſtem of faith, and diſcovered the progreſs it had already made, in a more perceptible manner. His *inſtitutions* †, which are ſaid to have been wrote in the twenty-third year of his age, may be juſtly regarded as a work of genius and refinement of a ſuperior kind for compoſition and ſtyle, to any theological performance of that age, when the ſcholaſtic divinity obſcured the labours of the learned. His other writings of the polemical kind, though leſs poliſhed, had all the marks of the ſame acute and original genius. A ſyſtematic divine, who rejected the lumber of the ſchools; a zealous antagoniſt of the hierarchy, and an innovator in the eſtabliſhed forms of the eccleſiaſtic worſhip and diſcipline, without fanaticiſm, a controverſial writer, who had imagination and ingenuity, and animated language to ſuſtain his erudition; he ſeemed to be deſtined and qualified for the taſk he undertook, to rend, with a fearleſs hand, the ſuperſtitious veil of the Roman

* Brantome Eloge de Francis I. Hiſtoire de l'Edit de Nantes, liv. i. p. 7. P. Daniel, 643.

† P. Daniel, p. 645.

ſanctuary.

ſanctuary. The doctrines of purgatory, the worſhip of images and relicts, the monaſtic vows, and the celibacy of the prieſts, the grant of diſpenſations and indulgences, and other like articles of the popiſh creed, invited the ſharp ſtrokes of his pen, which were entirely deciſive upon theſe ſubjects. His writings atchieved in France what Luther's bold addreſs and eloquence, as well as his literary works, performed in Germany. They determined the French converts to adopt thoſe particular opinions, in which Calvin differed from the German theologiſt. The growing churches of the reformation mourned at this early diviſion; and Rome beheld the breach with ſatisfaction and triumph.

IT deſerves alſo to be remarked, that the improvement which literature began to receive in France, while the vehicle of it was ſtill confined to the latin language, proved a happy bar againſt thoſe rude productions of illiterate enthuſiaſm, which diſfigured the features of the proteſtant doctrines in ſome other countries, where learning was in a leſs advanced ſtate; and where, when the controverſy with Rome was in its firſt ferment, the appeal was made in the uncouth garb of an uncultivated and barbarous language, not to ſocieties of the learned, nor to the court, but to the vulgar. The more general extenſion of letters, as well as the ſtate of the government, prevented this diſagreeable phænomenon in France. Calvin's book of inſtitutions, which he dedicated to Francis I. may be conſidered as a proof of the decency of ſtyle and manner obſerved by the firſt proteſtant writers. The indulgence of acrimonious and ſatirical language on the ſubject of the prieſtly offences, was become ſo faſhionable as to pleaſe rather than to give diſguſt; Eraſmus knew the predominant taſte of thoſe times, and artfully gave the harſh invective the finer turn of raillery.

Style of the firſt proteſtant writers in France.

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Fortitude of the proteſtant converts invincible by perſecution.

THE faith of the reformed converts, though unfed with fanatical writing, was found to have inſuperable energy. The engines of death prepared for its confuſion, being often endured, ſeemed to loſe their power of inflicting anguiſh. The marvellous conſtancy of the ſufferers diſplayed in a more ſtriking light than all the catechetical books of the learned could do, the merit and rectitude of that religious principle, which remained unſhaken in the midſt of torments. Every addition to the martyrology of the proteſtants became a ſubject of triumph, and a certain pledge of the increaſe of their adherents. This conſequence was ſufficiently manifeſt, from the firſt application of the penal ſtatutes. The reſtraints of authority, and the terrors of puniſhment in the former reign, inſtead of preventing it, had only obliged many to conceal their approbation of the new doctrines *. It was then that Du Chatel, grand almoner of France, uſed all his intereſt with the king to protect the famous typographer, Robert Elienne, or Stephanus, againſt the clamours of the faculty of Sorbonne, who had reaſon to believe that the royal foundery of printing which he managed, would be inſtrumental in conveying hereſy through the kingdom †. Even then the ſacred order, who were wedded to the church by profeſſed devotion and viſible intereſt, could not altogether reſiſt the impreſſions that were made on the minds of men, in favour of the principles of reformation. Several of them caught the tone of the proteſtant divines in their ſermons. They were obliged to ſubmit to reproof and diſcipline; and the faculty of theology in Paris drew up a formulary of the catholic tenets, upon the chief points of controverſy, which the preachers were ordered under certain penalties to make uſe of, as the touch-ſtone of the orthodoxy of

* Thuan. lib. iii. p. 57.

† P. Daniel, p. 649.

their diſcourſes and compoſitions. The catholic doctors accuſtomed to dogmatize, and decide in this arbitrary manner, ſuffered the pillage of their ſyſtem to go on for a conſiderable time before they choſe to enter the toilſome liſts of argumentation. Theſe directories of faith, publiſhed by royal authority, and the fires lighted up to terrify heretical apoſtates, being thus the only weapons employed for the defence of the church; it will not ſeem aſtoniſhing to thoſe who have obſerved the conſtitution of human nature, that the ſolemn appeals of the proſcribed party to the principles of religion, conſcience and humanity itſelf ſhould be hearkened to; and many inſtigated from thoſe very arguments of terror, to graſp more eagerly at that privilege of judgment in points of reaſon, which the tyranny of the Roman communion ſo ſeverely condemned, and which being the natural act of the mind, requires only to be once exerted, to render it proof againſt the efforts of external authority.

Origin and progreſs of the reformed tenets among people of rank and men of letters.

THE new opinions in France had not only their ſource, but for a conſiderable time their only progreſs among the men of letters; as the knowledge of them depended upon an acquaintance with books, or ſuch private intercourſe with miniſters and teachers as could not extend to the vulgar rank. Hence the proportion of converts amongſt them was quite inconſiderable; and whilſt the hiſtorians take notice of the appearance of hereſy amongſt the courtiers, the clergy, and the parliament of Paris, we can ſcarce trace the ſeeds of it among the multitude *. The martyrologies hardly deſcend to that claſs of men, but deſcribe characters or give deſignations of perſons of a ſuperior condition. If the doctrines of the reformers had found at firſt a wider ſcope, the fires in the

* De Aubigne, liv. ii. chap. 10. P. Daniel, p. 630.

PART II. Greve at Paris, would not have continued to gleam ſo long without interruption. But the fortreſs of the catholic church was the multitude. Attracted by a contexture of ſuperſtitious and political ties, inſtructed only in the abhorrence of heretics, accuſtomed to be moved on no other ſprings than thoſe of ſenſible machinery; they clung faſt to her grandeur and intereſt, and beheld thoſe baleful illuminations with incredible ſatisfaction and extaſy. This was her body militant, upon which no ſpiritual impreſſions would be made, and that ſupported her banner with unſhaken zeal in the courſe of the civil wars.

IN ſeveral countries the dread of ſudden burſts of popular fury, which the unlimited preſumption and licentious oratory of thoſe who addreſſed the multitude might excite, was a motive to princes of averſion to religious innovation, and an argument for exerciſing the terrors of the law againſt thoſe dangerous inſtruments of it. In France, where there was no ſuch argument, when the government was firm and vigorous, and the general maſs of the people retained their civil and religious obedience; the ſame, or rather a far more rigorous courſe of vengeance was followed. Government, it ſeems, will be alike diſpoſed to cruel meaſures, either from the weakneſs or plenitude of power. The parliament of Paris proceeded to inforce the execution of the edict of Chateau Briant, as Henry had lately remitted to this court, by a ſpecial ſtatute, the ultimate judgment of heretics *. The eccleſiaſtical tribunals were only allowed to determine whether the charge or accuſation amounted to hereſy. This inſtance of the royal attention to the antient maxims of the ſtate, which ſet bounds to clerical authority, and the confidence repoſed in the parliament, engaged that body to

Edict of Chateau Briant againſt the proteſtants.

* Thuan. lib. xvi. p. 340.

vie

vie with the church itſelf in the puniſhment and extirpation of heretical offenders *. De Thou takes notice of ſome proſecutions for hereſy before the parliament of Bourdeaux, in which immaturity of years and underſtanding being pleaded for the delinquents, the votes of the judges were equally divided. In all other criminal trials attended with this circumſtance, ſentence was pronounced on the merciful ſide. But the chamber of parliament agreed, that heretical caſes could not admit of this mitigation.

WHEN Henry reſolved upon the expedition to Naples, and entered into a league againſt the emperor with Paul IV. he was ſolicited and prevailed upon by the cardinal of Lorain to revoke the ſtatute he had eſtabliſhed for the trial of religious cauſes †, and to reſign the final determination of them to the eccleſiaſtical judicatures. This unexpected retrenchment of the civil authority, which was ſupreme in the parliament of Paris, drew from that court a remonſtance to the king, which ſhewed at once the real ſenſe of its members with reſpect to the perſecutions, and ſtrongly reflected on their own violent procedure. They declared it their opinion, that the exerciſe of the utmoſt ſeverity of the law had yet produced, and could be attended with no other conſequence than that of ſtimulating the obſtinacy and publiſhing the inflexible perſeverance of heretics; that ſuch experience juſtified the rule, and led to the imitation of the primitive church, which, inſtead of having recourſe to fire and ſword, for the ſupport of the faith, had procured a more eligible and efficacious defence in the ſound doctrines and exemplary lives of her miniſters and teachers. They propoſed to the king, that inſtead of annulling the ſtatute, to have delegates of

Remonſtrance of the parliament of Paris againſt religious perſecution.

* Thuan. lib. xvii. p. 367.

† Matth. liv. iii. p. 195. Thuan. ibid.

their

PART II. their body, thoſe eſpecially that were churchmen joined with the inquiſitor of the faith and other eccleſiaſtics, appointed to judge religious cauſes, and give a final ſentence, liable only to the review of the parliament. Upon this remonſtrance, the point of juriſdiction was left by the king in ſuſpence. The courſe of trial fluctuated between the civil and eccleſiaſtical courts. The ſcheme of the conjunct juriſdiction, which alſo appears to have been followed, afforded no proſpect of relief to the unhappy delinquent; as appeals from the commiſſioned judges were conſidered to be deſperate, and never to become the ſubject of impartial diſcuſſion, on account of the influence of thoſe who had already given ſentence in the cauſes betwixt the two contending judicatures, there was this conſiderable difference to the pannels, the biſhops or the clerical courts only claimed the power to incarcerate heretics *. The parliament condemned them to death. We may gueſs from the penalty of death annexed to hereſy by the canon law, who were the framers of it. We may judge what luſtre the civil authority received from it, when, as in the example before us, it only contended for the privilege of executing the prepoſterous deciſions of the papal ſtatutes.

A conventicle of the proteſtants attacked.

THE ſecret meetings of the proteſtant ſect for worſhip and inſtruction had been for a long time managed with the utmoſt precaution. The addreſs and ability of this continued concealment, proves the condition and rank of the perſons capable to perſiſt in the tract of it. They thought themſelves more than commonly ſecured from diſcovery, in the midſt of the conſternation at the defeat of St. Quintin. Their reſort under night in greater numbers than uſual, to a houſe in the ſtreet of St. Jaque,

* Thuan. lib. 6.

was

was obſerved. Their place of aſſembly was ſoon beſet by a multitude. They were attacked, and ſeveral of them wounded. The men pierced through the multitude with their drawn ſwords, when an officer, with ſome of the city guards, appeared, and ſeized all the women who were above a hundred perſons *. But how ſurpriſing might this capture ſeem, when upon examination it was found to include not only perſons of the firſt quality, but ſome ladies of the queen's houſehold. Leſt this ſtate of the fact may appear exaggerated, it muſt be obſerved that Catharine of Medicis, daughter of Laurence duke of Urbin, and niece of Clement VII. Henry's royal conſort, that woman whoſe figure is ſo capital in the hiſtory of the ſucceſſive reigns of three monarchs, who in a turbulent period of thirty years never loſt her hold of the helm of government, and who ſeemed to exiſt only by the faculty and act of ruling, was at this time, in the reign of her huſband, ſcarcely diſcernible in the political ſphere of the court, and reduced, in ſupport of her aſſumed tranquillity, to hide her latent reſentment of Henry's amorous attachments, in the diſguiſed character of a prude. To feign no diſtaſte of the ſentiments of a religious ſect, who among people of underſtanding were known to preſcribe and obſerve peculiar regularity and ſtrictneſs of manners, not only correſponded with Catharine's affected prudery, but would ſooth her hidden but virulent antipathy to Diana the dutcheſs of Valentinois, who ranged through the circle of the pleaſures and luxury of Henry's court, and manifeſted her hatred of the heretical party. When this circumſtance is attended to, the queen's connivance at the reſort of the ladies of her train to a private meeting of thoſe of

* P. Daniel, p. 653. Hiſt. du Edit de Nantes, liv. i. p. 16.

the

PART II. the new profeſſion; inſtead of being a queſtionable point, has all the appearance of probability.

IT became gradually more apparent and viſible, that many perſons of the firſt rank and character were bending to the ſide of hereſy. The cardinal of Lorain, and his brother the duke of Guiſe, became, for this reaſon, the more ſenſible of what conſequence it was, according to the plan pointed out by cardinal Granvel, to diſtinguiſh themſelves and their family as the pillars of the catholic church, and to illuſtrate the merit and importance of their public ſervices, by the additional reputation of being the avowed and irreconcileable enemies of the apoſtates from the true faith. To build upon the old and ſtill ſtable foundations of the papal hierarchy, beſt correſponded with their unlimited views of ambition and grandeur, as it ſtated them in oppoſition to the king of Navarre, who was the firſt prince of the blood in France, whoſe intereſt and theirs could never be conjoined *. It connected them alſo more intimately with the dutcheſs of Valentinois, whoſe emolument the ſpoil and confiſcations of heretics became, and counterpoiſed by this means the influence of their antient antagoniſt, the conſtable Montmorency, whoſe nephews the Colignis were known to be reproached with unſteadineſs in the catholic faith. A firm adherence to thoſe principles of political action, was therefore recommended to them from the moſt powerful motives and arguments. The cardinal of Lorain †, whoſe eccleſiaſtical dignity it became to curb the growth of apoſtacy, proceeded to make a material experiment in the way of his ſyſtem, by informing the king that the admiral Coligni's brother d'Andelot, was publicly charged with

The Guiſes diſtinguiſh themſelves as haters of hereſy.

* Thuan. lib. 22. † Matthieu, lib. xi. p. 201.

deriding

deriding the maſs, and venting heretical opinions. Henry, whoſe favour for D'Andelot was heightened by recent proofs of his military ſkill and bravery in the ſiege of Calais, unwillingly heard the accuſation; but imagining that D'Andelot was concerned in point of reputation to diſclaim the charge, he ſent him a meſſage, that he was obliged to queſtion him upon the point of religion, and expected he would be cautious in his replies, as the king was loth to find him in the wrong. D'Andelot attended his majeſty as he ſat at table, who declared, that from real concern and regard, he gave him this opportunity to wipe off the aſperſions of hereſy which were thrown out againſt him, and that he inſiſted only for a declaration of his ſentiments of the maſs *. D'Andelot, who from his habits as a ſoldier, was accuſtomed to freedom of ſpeech, and whoſe tongue had often betrayed his thoughts upon the ſubject in queſtion, made ſuch an anſwer to the king as might have been expected from a diſciple of Calvin. Henry, with a mixture of anger and regret in his looks, bid him take heed and correct his expreſſions, as he deſired not to expoſe himſelf to more ſevere animadverſion. Though poſſeſſed of quickneſs of invention and dexterity in the ſphere of his profeſſion, and even in many difficult points of conduct foreign to it; D'Andelot had not the faculty of throwing a ſmoother gloſs over his creed about the maſs. He anſwered, "That he had it as far as poſſible at heart to prove himſelf dutiful and obſequious to his majeſty, and to make his ſervices bear teſtimony of his acknowledgment of his royal favour; but that in the matter of religion he could not play the hypocrite with God: that his perſon, property and rank in the ſtate might be diſpoſed of at his majeſty's pleaſure, while he alone, whoſe gift

D'Andelot queſtioned upon his faith by Henry II.

* Thuan. lib. xx.

PART II. his ſoul and conſcience were, had right to claim a dominion over them." The king, diſappointed and provoked by this reſolute reply, threw down the plate which he held in his hand, and hit the Dauphin with it, who ſat beneath him at table. D'Andelot was immediately taken into cuſtody, and afterwards committed priſoner to the caſtle of Melun. The intereſt of the conſtable Montmorency, upon his return to court, in a ſhort time procured his releaſe.

In concluding the peace of Chateau Cambreſis, the conſtable Montmorency and the cardinal of Lorain had both concurred; the one in order to recover his place at court, the other with a view to turn the king's thoughts more directly to the ſuppreſſion of heretics. That article in the treaty concerning the extinction of religious differences, and reſtoring peace to the catholic church; being deviſed by the cardinal of Lorain and the Spaniſh miniſter; the firſt precedent was ſet for embroiling the kingdom of France by the intrigues that were afterwards carried on by the court of Spain in concert with the Guiſes. Princes, whoſe predeceſſors had been continually enthralled and inſulted by the papal tyranny, and who never thought of the leaſt defence againſt the effects of it, were eaſily perſuaded by the ſpiritual guides of Rome, that their glory and their intereſt were highly concerned in the deſtruction of heretics *. Rebellion and hereſy were declared to be ſynonimous terms. Henry had been carefully impreſſed with this opinion. From the conference with D'Andelot, he was convinced of the prevalence of the offenſive principles, and believed that his court was become a receptacle for them. The cardinal of Lorain uſed

* Thuan. lib. xxii. p. 459.

all

all his endeavours to heighten theſe apprehenſions, and forming a party of the moſt zealous catholics at court, he got it repreſented to the king, that the terrors of the law had hitherto been only levelled againſt vulgar heretics, while the evil lay too deep to be expelled by their puniſhment; ſince the chief ſource of it aroſe from the behaviour of thoſe in civil authority, who from a bias to apoſtacy, or from motives of private friendſhip and favour, invented arguments and pretences in the courts of judicature for ſuſpending the courſe of legal puniſhments. This was an intended thruſt at the parliament of Paris, in which the high tone of zeal was obſerved to be a little abated, and doubts ſtarted by ſome members about the propriety of their procedure in religious queſtions.

The cardinal of Lorain inſtigates the king to make inquiry after apoſtates.

The court of parliament in Paris, though it included a large proportion of the clerical order, from its conſtitution, from the complexion of its ſeveral members, from attachment to former precedents, and the claim of privilege, appeared to have particular motives to the exerciſe of moderation in their procedure in religious proceſſes. But the predominant principles of the times, as well as ſtrict conformity to the tenor and execution of the law, which was the very eſſence of their authority, ſuppreſſed for a conſiderable time the influence of theſe motives, and rendered them co-operators with the church and ſtate in the vigorous proſecution of heretics. This attitude was ſomewhat forced, and could not always be kept up without ſome recoiling to another poize. The erudition, the ingenuity, and the unwarped principles of religion and virtue, for which many of this body were illuſtrious, diſcovered their energy at laſt. Part of them, according to the antient principles of the kingdom, wiſhed to ſee a check given to the licentious conduct and domineering ſpirit of the court of Rome.

Several members of the court of parliament inclined to toleration.

PART II. Others ſcepticized in ſeveral points of faith, and to ſhun the ſcandal of imputed hereſy, argued for moderation, on the known tenets of the Galican church. Many of them began to loath the endleſs repetition of cruel and unavailing ſeverity; and finding their concurrence with it, had not prevented ſeveral attacks upon their right of juriſdiction, were diſpoſed to join in firmer purpoſes to mitigate the rigour of the penalties inflicted for religion. As the king, by the inſtigation of the cardinal of Lorain, had requeſted the court of parliament to meet on purpoſe to deliberate on the methods of executing his edict of Chateau Briant, an explication of theſe ſentiments that prevailed among them enſued.

BY a ſtatute in the reign of Lewis XII. and renewed in that of Francis I. the preſidents of the great chamber of parliament, together with thoſe of the court of inqueſts, aſſiſted by the king's attorney general, and his other counſellors of law, were required to meet at ſtated times, and paſs a kind of cenſorial judgment upon the behaviour and conduct of the ſeveral members of their body *; and in caſe of apparent miſdemeanors in the character of individuals, or of culpable negligence in the functions of their office, or injuſtifiable oppoſition to legal procedure, they were impowered to inflict cenſure or puniſhment. The cardinal of Lorain's party had concerted to introduce the ſubject of the judicial proſecution of heretics, according to the king's order, into this department of the parliament; termed from the Latin name of the day of the week in which it was held, the *mercurial* convention; and by importunity had prevailed with Henry to attend it in perſon. He came unexpectedly, when the members entered upon the

Henry appears in a meeting of the parliament.

* Matthieu. Thuan. ibid.

debate

debate about the perſecutions for religion. He ſpoke in ſuch a tone as ſhewed upon what motive he had taken this unprecedented ſtep, and commanded them to proceed in his preſence to deliver their opinions. The danger to which freedom of debate expoſed them, was manifeſt. The reſtraint, though great, was however ſurmounted by the reſolution and boldneſs of ſeveral members.

Speeches of Lewis du Faur and Anne du Bourg in it.

When the ſubject was reſumed, Arnold Ferrére, a perſon of ſingular integrity, and diſtinguiſhed for his eminent knowledge of the laws, led the way to an unreſerved diſplay of the ſentiments entertained by many of them, concerning the iniquitous application of the penal ſtatutes. Lewis du Faur alledged, that though it were allowed that religious differences produced diſorders in the ſtate, yet conſidering the palpable errors and corruptions of the Roman ſee, the queſtion ſtill remained to be put; Whence aroſe thoſe differences? or, in the words of the prophet to Ahab; *Who art thou that troubleſt Iſrael?* Anne du Bury inſiſted, that there were many heinous offences, thoſe of blaſphemy, horrid ſwearing, leudneſs, frequent perjury, crimes that were ſeverely puniſhable by the laws, which, inſtead of expoſing offenders to the gibbet and torture, were allowed to eſcape all animadverſion, and to derive a kind of licence and triumph from impunity; whilſt every ſpecies of mortal vengeance was daily inflicted upon people, againſt whom no accuſation for civil offences had ever been laid, who took no occaſion to ſpeak of the king and his government, but in their prayers and devout petitions for his proſperity, and whom even the ineffectual trials by torture, to wring from them confeſſions of ſecret guilt, abſolved from all juſt grounds of ſuſpicion. In fine, added he, upon this account alone they are reckoned ſeditious, becauſe they are diſpoſed to challenge the enormities of the

Roman

PART II. Roman pontificate, and to confront the errors and vices of which it hath been too long the nurſery, with the unerring rule of ſacred ſcripture. The king, after hearing a reply made to theſe ſpeeches by Giles le Maitre, the firſt preſident, and other members of the meeting, whoſe zeal excited them to blow up the flames of perſecution, declared, that the report he had heard of ſome of the court of parliament, being contemners of the pontifical and royal authority, was in this inſtance confirmed beyond all doubt; and that the fault of a few would neceſſarily become injurious to the reputation and authority of their whole body, unleſs all who were found in their principles of faith and loyalty continued to teſtify by the courſe of their deliberations, an unſhaken conſtancy and vigorous perſeverance in the diſcharge of their duty. Then riſing from his ſeat, he ordered the conſtable Montmorency to ſeize the perſons of du Bourg and du Faur, which was preſently executed by the count of Montgomery, captain of the Scotch guards. Paul de Foix, Anthony Fumee, and de la Porte, whoſe appearance had alſo made them obnoxious, were apprehended in their houſes. Ferrére, and two other counſellors, betook themſelves to flight.

Henry orders ſeveral counſellors of the parliament to be ſeized.

THE unprecedented and arbitrary manner in which Henry interpoſed his ſovereign authority, to over-rule the ſuffrages and procedure of the committee of the court of parliament, was variouſly interpreted, according to the different conceptions men had of the importance and neceſſity of this extraordinary meaſure *. But it was the ſenſe entertained, and the language ſpoken by the intelligent, who, without reſpect to religion, conſidered it only as an act of government, that Henry wounded his royal authority,

* Thuan. lib. xxv. p. 461.

by

by infringing that of the conſtitutional laws. The growth and elevation of the monarchical power, hath not hitherto effectuated a great alteration in the political ſentiment, or the original language; the plaineſt teſtimonies of which are to this day apparent in the kingdom.

Increaſe of the proteſtant converts.

THE proteſtant party, hardened with their ſufferings, were not more diſmayed with the indignation which Henry's appearance in the *mercurial* meeting of parliament expreſſed toward them, than with the ordinary courſe of puniſhments they beheld many of their brethren undergo *. Near the ſuburbs of St. Germain, which began to be called the little Geneva, ſome of them had ventured the year before to ſing aloud ſome of the Pſalms of David, which Marot had tranſlated into French verſe. A vaſt number of people in the public walks joined with them. The tuneful company increaſed the next day, among whom appeared Anthony of Bourbon, king of Navarre, father of Henry IV. and his queen Jean d'Albret. This vocal chorus provoked the clergy, and was prohibited under ſevere penalties. The new ſpecies of pſalmody, though ſtigmatized by the church, made converts to the proteſtant ſide. Calvin's books and treatiſes were circulated every where, in ſpite of the inhibitions to import or read them. The near correſpondence with Geneva furniſhed a continual ſupply of the materials requiſite for inſtruction and controverſy, which people of all ranks were deſirous to peruſe, from curioſity heightened by reſtraint, as well as from more ſerious and intereſting motives. The divines and teachers of the reformed faith, though excluded from public miniſtrations, laboured aſſidu-

* Thuan. ibidem.

PART II. ouſly in private; and inſtead of being intimidated by the late tranſaction in parliament, took an opportunity very ſoon after to hold a ſynodical meeting in the ſuburbs of Paris, in order to draw up a confeſſion of their faith, and form ſome general plan of eccleſiaſtical diſcipline and government *. In the firſt of theſe, which hiſtory has recorded at large, ſubjection to civil authority is aſſerted in the ſtrongeſt terms. In the midſt of public rejoicings, celebrated after the public peace, and in honour of the marriage of the daughter of France with the king of Spain, and that of the king's ſiſter with the duke of Savoy, Henry II. was killed by an accidental wound he received from the count of Montgomery, in the career of a tournament. The mortal blow was given on the thirtieth of June 1559, and he expired the eleventh day after. The ſtate and condition of France at his death may be underſtood from the previous narrative. The traits of that ſpecies of heroiſm, which blended the martial and the amorous paſſion in one romantic character, embelliſhed that of Henry, who ſignalized himſelf as the model of it in his age. In him it had much of the martial caſt, with ſmall improvements of literature, or the aids of knowledge and reflexion. The internal part of government was not much his province. The direction of the cabinet and the political counſels being wholly left to his miniſters; they who before poſſeſſed a great ſhare of power, grew up to be heads of faction, crowned with public honours and reputation. While a prince ſat on the throne, who had conſiderable fame abroad, and the love of the ſubjects at home, the danger that might ariſe from the colliſion and intrigues of the oppoſite parties of the Guiſes and Montmorencies, was only diſcernible. But the

Death of Henry II.

* D'Aubigne, liv. ii. chap. 3.

proſpect

proſpect became obvious and palpable to all, who had the leaſt foreſight of effects from their cauſes; when by the ſudden tranſition of the royalty to Francis II. the whole ſtreſs of government, and the political adminiſtration appeared to be thrown upon the management of the queen mother; too weak in her authority to reſtrain the ambition of the contending parties, and too ſelfiſh to apply all the remedies neceſſary to allay their diſcontents and animoſities, ariſing both from civil and religious pretenſions.

THE HISTORY of FRANCE.

Reign of FRANCIS II.

BOOK I.

CHAPTER I.

Francis's imbecillity—The queen mother's coalition with the Guiſes—Excluſion of the princes of the blood from the offices of the ſtate—Character and conduct of Anthony king of Navarre—Oppoſition of the Guiſes to Anthony's chief friends, and the principles of toleration.

FRANCIS II. ſucceeded to the crown, and received the cuſtomary homage paid to the heir of the royalty, in the ſixteenth year of his age, which from a ſtatute in the reign of Charles V. was computed to exceed that of minority by two years. Joined to this immature age, he had ſuch natural defects of conſtitution as uſually produce imbecillity of mind. Under theſe diſadvantages, he was apparently unfit to manage the reins of Year 1559. July 11.

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government without the guidance of adminiſtrators; and the parties already formed in the ſtate had reaſon to conſider the commencement of his reign as a critical period, that would bring to a ſpeedy deciſion their eager conteſt about ſuperior influence and authority in the government. In no preceding reign ſince the regular eſtabliſhment of the monarchy and the royal power, was the queſtion about the choice of its chief adminiſtrators of greater importance, nor more intereſting to the ſtate and nation. In the ſituation of the kingdom from the acceſſion of a diſeaſed prince, from the mutual enmity of the families of Guiſe and Montmorency, and from the remarkable number of able and diſtinguiſhed chieftains, and the multiplication of the proteſtants, the public tranquillity evidently depended on the determination of the important point; and it required an uncommon degree of capacity, attention and diligence, to ſurmount the difficulties attending it.

Francis being weak in body and mind.

Catharine of Medicis exerts herſelf in ſettling the government.

BY taking upon herſelf the difficult taſk of ſettling the government, upon the abrupt ſucceſſion of Francis, Catharine of Medicis, the queen mother, gave the firſt diſplay of her celebrated genius *. Prudent as well as ambitious, her plan was to maintain the dignity of the crown in the perſon of her ſon, and at the ſame time to ſecure to herſelf the higheſt authority in the ſtate. Her natural rank in the government, when its circumſtances were conſidered, entitled her to entertain this aim; but the proper method of procedure, in order to the ſucceſsful attainment of it, was doubtful and uncertain. It eſpecially required deliberation, to which of the parties ſhe could unite herſelf with moſt advantage, when ſhe intended, by means of a connexion with one or more of them, to provide for the ſupport of the royalty and the eſtabliſhment of her

* D'Avila, liv. i.

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own grandeur. It was alſo manifeſt, that the competition for rank and intereſt in the ſtate, was not confined, as in the former reign, to the families of Montmorency and Guiſe. From the antient forms of the monarchy, the title of Anthony of Bourbon, king of Navarre, and firſt prince of the blood, to be called to the firſt or chief office in the government, was reſpectable, and might with more plauſible reaſon be inſiſted upon in the preſent juncture, when the infirm health and weak faculties of the young king would render a delegation of the ſovereign power neceſſary. Though, from the cautious maxims of policy, the advancement of the Guiſes had been preferred, by the two late monarchs, to that of the prince of Bourbon, and their near affinity to Mary queen of Scotland, Francis's royal conſort, connected them now more intimately with the crown; yet Catharine was ſenſible, that neither the reputation of their recent ſervices, nor their attachment to the young ſovereign, would be regarded in the kingdom as arguments ſufficient for the higher exaltation of their authority *. Founded as the pretenſions of the princes of the blood were, in the uſages of the kingdom, and generally favoured in the nation, ſhe knew that their excluſion from the miniſtry might be deemed an arbitrary and unconſtitutional meaſure. But having carefully revolved the perplexing argument in her mind, during the time that Henry languiſhed under his mortal wound, ſhe concluded that her political views would be beſt promoted by an union with the Guiſes, and after ſome heſitation ſhe reſolved to embrace it.

She diſregards the claim of the firſt princes of the blood, to rank in the ſtate.

To admit the princes of the blood into the chief management of the ſtate, would appear to the queen mother a new and hazardous

* D'Aubigne, liv. ii. chap. 14.

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meaſure *. Their family intereſt, and the number of their partizans, and even the title by which they claimed pre-eminence in the government, would be conſidered by her as ſpecial objections to their advancement. Jealouſy dictated to her, that by being placed at the helm of government they would aſſume a degree of power compatible with the exiſtence of her own authority, and derogatory to the royalty itſelf. On the contrary, the Guiſes ſeemed to poſſeſs ſuch a meaſure of reputation and influence, as might be rendered ſubſervient to her purpoſes, and conduce to the eſtabliſhment and ſecurity of the government. Having no privilege or claim to act as adminiſtrators to the king, but in conſequence of an aſſociation with her; Catharine preſumed that the ſenſe of the ſupport they derived from it, would reſtrain their ambition. The formal application they now made to conciliate her favour confirmed her in this opinion, and ſtrengthened the other motives ſhe had to join intereſt with them, rather than with the princes of the blood, or the Montmorencies †. Beſides, Francis duke of Guiſe, and Charles, cardinal of Lorain, there were four other brothers, the duke d'Aumale, the cardinal of Guiſe, the grand Prior, and the Marquis d'Elbæuf, who compoſed this renowned family, that now ſeemed to be arrived at an æra moſt favourable to its aggrandiſement.

Her motives for preferring, in a political eſtimate, the Guiſes to the princes of Bourbon.

The intereſt of the conſtable Montmorency, undervalued by the chief parties.

The influence of the conſtable Montmorency in the ſtate, was ſo depreſſed at this juncture, that neither the queen mother, the princes of Bourbon, nor the Guiſes, made much account of it. The defeat at St. Quintin, and the late treaty of peace, reckoned equally diſhonourable to France, had obſcured his reputation,

* D'Avila, ibid.

† Matthieu, liv. ii. p. 58.

which was now, after Henry's death, arraigned with more freedom by his adverſaries. In the time of his higheſt elevation at court, he never had been popular; and while he oppoſed the Guiſes, his temper and his principles of conduct were ſuch, as rendered him little ſtudious of ingratiating himſelf with the princes of the blood, or any other party, that was too conſiderable to be ſubordinate to his own. Apprehending with reaſon that he would be deſtitute of ſupport, in the midſt of the factions that would ariſe upon Henry's death, and deſirous to throw an obſtruction in the way of the Guiſes, his chief opponents *, he diſpatched Deſmarais, one of the gentlemen of the bed-chamber, to inform Anthony of Bourbon, then at Bearn, that no hope was entertained of the king's life, and that the public welfare, as well as his own intereſt, required his immediate preſence in the court upon this unhappy emergency. Though the frequent meaning of this meſſage was plain, the king of Navarre paid little regard to what was adviſed by one, who, while he had the chief direction of the affairs of ſtate, had ſhewn no concern for the promotion of his intereſt; and in the time of the peace of Chateau Cambreſis, had treated it with manifeſt negligence and contempt. He only put himſelf in motion towards Vendoſme, and there expected a meeting of his friends to conſult about the proſecution of his journey to Paris.

THE queen mother availed herſelf of the conſtable's incapacity to interpoſe in the affairs of government, without the concurrence of the firſt prince of the blood; and to prevent his appearing in the place of his office at court †, he was charged with the ſuperintendance of the late king's funeral; the ſolemnities of which, by the

The royal obſequies uſually continued for forty days.

* Thuan. lib. xxiii. p. 464. † Ibid.

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cuſtom of the kingdom, were prolonged for the ſpace of forty days. In the mean time, the court having removed from the palace of the Tournelles to that of the Louvre, during the reſpite of public buſineſs, occaſioned by the obſequies, a deſirable opportunity was given Catharine to ſurvey with more leiſure and attention the ground-work of her authority, and to adjuſt ſome obſtacles that ſtill ſtood in the way of her coalition with the Guiſes. By uniting with them it appeared, that ſhe regulated her conduct by motives purely political. The obſequious attachment they had ſhewn to the ducheſs of Valentinois, remarkable by the marriage of the duke of Aumale to her daughter, was a circumſtance ſufficient to have created a rooted prejudice againſt them. But, though Catharine, having the recent memory of the indignities ſhe had ſuffered by the triumph of her rival, could not diſpenſe with ſome gratification of her reſentment againſt ſo peculiar an object of it; ſhe ſhewed herſelf capable of governing the impulſe of this keen paſſion of her ſex, in ſuch a way that did not hinder her purpoſed reconcilement with the Guiſes. She only inſiſted to have the ducheſs diveſted of the oſtentatious trophies of her former exaltation. By the terms of the agreement *, Diana was obliged to ſurrender the rich preſents of jewels and coſtly furniture which Henry had given her, to quit her magnificent villa of Chenonceaux on the Cher, and to retire to a diſtant habitation that was aſſigned her, near the banks of the Loire. The duke of Aumale, who expected the inheritance of her precious moveables, as well as of her land, refuſed at firſt to ſubmit to this depredation; but the arguments of his brothers, reſpecting the higher intereſt of their family, prevailed with him to yield the point.

An obſtacle to a coalition with the Guiſes, being overcome by Catharine.

* Matthieu, liv. iv. p. 210.

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The offices of adminiſtration are fixed by her, in abſence of two princes of the blood, and in oppoſition to the conſtable's remonſtrances.

AFTER this compromiſe about the ducheſs of Valentinois, the bond of union between the queen mother and the Guiſes being more firmly cemented, the general plan of adminiſtration was agreed upon *. To the duke of Guiſe, the charge of the army and of all military affairs was reſigned. The management of the finances and of civil tranſactions was committed to the cardinal of Lorain. For the queen mother were reſerved the firſt place in the cabinet council, and the general ſuperintendence of the different branches of government †. But, before they proceeded to diſtribute the other great offices of the ſtate, they artfully contrived to diſmiſs the only two princes of the blood at court, from whoſe diſcontent or jealouſy they had any thing to fear. The prince of Conde, brother to the king of Navarre, and the prince of la Roche-Sur-Yon, were pitched upon, by way of honour and diſtinction, to go ambaſſadors to the king of Spain, who had not yet quitted the Netherlands. The one was commiſſioned to ſwear and ratify the treaty of peace, and the other appointed to carry the collar of the order of St. Michael to his catholic majeſty. This artifice ſucceeded, and kept their friends and party in ſuſpenſe. The old conſtable had early dreaded this combination of queen Catharine and the Guiſes; and as they had required of him the delivery of the ſecretary's ſignet for diſpatch, he immediately took the alarm. Though the ceremonies of the royal funeral ſcarce permitted his abſence, he came to the palace of the Louvre; and after paying the cuſtomary obeiſance to the king, he got himſelf admitted to a conference with the queen mother. He endeavoured to make her ſenſible that ſhe might derive inexpreſſible honour to herſelf, and eſtabliſh the felicity and glory of her ſon's reign upon

* D'Avila, ibid.

† Matthieu, ibid.

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the ſureſt foundation, if ſhe engaged him to accommodate the plan of his government, not to the narrow and intereſted principles of a party, but to that conſtitutional ſyſtem, which was built upon the coherence of the ſeveral orders of the kingdom, and ſtrengthened by the cordial affections of the French nobility *. He declared that her attention to this, in the new reign, would be beſt demonſtrated by the continuation of the ſervants of the crown in their ſeveral employments and offices, and that it became her to reflect that ſhe undertook the management of a nation, whoſe loyalty and ſubmiſſion to their own kings and rulers could only be ſhaken by their averſion to the government of foreigners. Queen Catharine heard this animadverſion on her ſyſtem without reſentment. Knowing that the conſtable's oppoſition was not, at preſent, much to be dreaded; ſhe ſent him back with many ſoothing promiſes to his ſolemn charge at the Tournelles.

Catharine and the Guiſes engage ſeveral men of great reputation to the offices of ſtate.

As the queen mother and the Guiſes ſhewed addreſs in the concert of their plan, ſo it muſt be admitted, that in conferring the offices of adminiſtration, they acted not with temerity, or undiſtinguiſhing caprice †. Attentive to the public judgment of the character and abilities of thoſe in power, they took care to employ in the functions of government ſuch perſons as were eminent, both in capacity and reputation. This wiſe procedure not only ſtifled the voice of calumny againſt their aſſumption of ſupreme authority, but by giving credit and dignity to their adminiſtration, communicated to it a certain conſiſtency and juſt arrangement, in which the ſudden elevation of a party generally proves defective. It was a conſiderable mark of the confidence repoſed in them, by

* Thuan. ibid. p. 464. Matth. ibid. † D'Avila, ibid. Thuan. ibid.

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people of different characters and parties, that the chancellor Francis Oliver, and the cardinal of Tournon, were both engaged to reſume their places in the council of ſtate. The one had every qualification to recommend him to the public eſteem that became his high office. His removal from the exerciſe of it in the late reign, though in the decline of his years, had rather heightened the general opinion of his ſingular worth and unblemiſhed integrity; and he returned to it now with the ſame unbiaſſed views to the public ſervice. The other, tenacious and rigid in his principles as a churchman, had given ſuch proof of his knowledge and ſkill in the affairs of government, as juſtified his promotion to the firſt employments in the ſtate under Francis I. and though lately entered into ſome better underſtanding with the Guiſes, he had ſtill reaſon to remember former inſtances of the cardinal of Lorain's diſguſt and averſion to him. By the admiſſion of thoſe men and ſome others to places, the judgment and policy of the queen mother particularly appeared, ſince their detachment from party enabled her to ſet bounds to the ambition of the Guiſes. The powerful influence of the court drew many others to their party, who formerly had followed other leaders *. Of all who felt it, the marſhal St. Andre was the moſt memorable inſtance. His military genius, his uncommon endowments, the compaſs of his knowledge and parts, equalled by the ardor of his paſſions in all his purſuits, whether laudable or inconſiſtent with honour and virtue, gave him a rank and place in the court of Henry II. more independent of the favourite miſtreſs and the two rival factions than any other perſon. The engine and image of the extravagant pleaſures and gallantry of that court, he employed all his credit there to ſupport

† Le Laboureur Addit. aux Caſtlenau, fol. edit. au Bruxelles, liv. iv. p. 76.

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his boundleſs expence and prodigality. The devourer of court-favours, and the plunderer of private property, his rapacity ſaved him not from an immenſe load of debt. Having loſt the ballance of Henry's favour, which alone ſupported him, he now ſought to ſhoot the gulph of deſtruction before him, by propoſing an infamous contract with the Guiſes to defraud his creditors, or thoſe whom he had robbed, to enrich himſelf. He offered to betroth his only daughter to any one of the duke of Guiſe's ſons, and to make a conveyance of his whole eſtate to the huſband, with the reſervation of a life-rent to himſelf and his wife. Thus he became a neceſſary and inglorious votary to the Guiſes. The generality of the nobles ſcarce concerned themſelves with what paſſed at court*. The clergy hoped for every thing agreeable to their wiſhes, from the warm attachment of the Guiſes to the intereſt of the catholic church. The parliament of Paris humbled with the late chaſtiſement, was not diſpoſed to provoke freſh indignation, by any ungracious advice or remonſtrance about the plan of government. As the great chamber of that court conſiſted of ſuch a number of the clerical order, their influence, when fully exerted, was ſufficient to guide its moſt important deciſions. But to prevent any queſtion that might be ſtarted in the parliament about the formality of the adminiſtration, and to give their authority a regular ſanction †, the queen mother and the Guiſes took care to have it in intimated by the king to theſe delegates of that body, who came to addreſs him upon his acceſſion to the throne, that he had committed the management of all the affairs of ſtate to the duke of Guiſe and the cardinal of Lorain, his uncles; and that this report of his will and pleaſure ſhould now be made to the parliament,

* D'Aubigne, liv. ii. chap. 14. † Thuan. ibid.

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that the due obedience might be rendered to it. In this manner did queen Catharine, a ſtranger in the court of France, aſſociated only with the family of Guiſe, which had lately eſtabliſhed itſelf in the kingdom, ſucceed in forming and regulating the whole government of the ſtate in the beginning of Francis I.'s reign, without regard or deference to the princes of the blood; and with only the ſimple form of a declaration of the young king's will to the parliament of Paris.

The ſituation and character of the two chief princes of Bourbon.

THE princes of the houſe of Bourbon had been, for ſuch a long tract of time, excluded from all the high employments at court, that their honorary privilege and rank there appeared to many to be ſuperſeded by cuſtom; as their pretenſions to a pre-eminence in the government ſeemed to be antiquated by time, and aboliſhed by the riper æra of the monarchy *. Anthony duke of Vendoſme, the eldeſt of the family, had given undoubted proofs of his perſonal bravery, among the diſtinguiſhed captains of the late war. But his qualification of blood and his military merit were ſo far from being thought ſufficient to entitle him to peculiar honours, that they prevented not his continuing in a kind of civil baniſhment from court. Baulked of Henry's aſſiſtance, and bereft of all his government of Guienne, which he held as firſt prince of the blood; he endured this treatment, as the lot of his family, with a cold and inactive diſdain, which ſhewed the natural facility and remiſſneſs of his temper. Inclined to indulge the agreeable hope of better fortune, and ſoothed with the title of king of Navarre, he ſeemed, in the ſociety of his queen, and the poſſeſſion of the ſeigniory of Bearn, and ſome ſmall territory at the foot of the Pyrenees, to anticipate the poſſeſſion of ſovereign power, and to

* Addit aux Caſtelnau, liv. iii. p. 846. Matthieu, ibid. p. 208.

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value his empty title to a crown as no unſufficient equivalent for the degradation of the Bourbon family. His natural indolence, and contracted averſion to the court, were cheriſhed by Des Cars and Boucharts, his domeſtic confidents, who repreſented the conſtable's party, and that of the Guiſes, as equally unamicable to him. This impreſſion detained him at Vendoſme, and rendered ineffectual Montmorency's repeated ſolicitations to him to haſten to the court. But other partners of his fortune, and more eſpecially his brother Lewis prince of Conde, prompted him not to relinquiſh the privilege of his blood in France, but to ground his hopes upon it, as the ſureſt pledge of his grandeur.

This prince had a character, which needed only the advantage of court favour, or of the field of honour, to diſplay it. His qualities as a ſoldier, illuſtrated by thoſe appearances of a firm, open and liberal mind, which are more attractive than bravery itſelf, had engaged the eſteem of many in the army, and procured the approbation of the late king, who declared his intention to beſtow upon him the government of Picardy *. With almoſt as much warmth and keenneſs of ſpirit, as his brother diſcovered of a cool and languid diſpoſition; his temper naturally eaſy and gay, was ſharpened by the narrowneſs of his fortune. His indignation being once rouſed againſt the ruling party at court, which he looked upon as a combination of the adverſaries of his family; he could neither repreſs nor conceal his diſcontent, nor meaſure his purpoſes by a ſtandard unproportioned to the natural boldneſs and impetuoſity of his mind †. It is alledged by ſome late French writers, as a teſtimony of the low ſituation to which the houſe of Bourbon

* D'Avila, ibid.

† Hiſtoire d'Europe par Voltaire.

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was reduced, that this prince had only ſix thouſand livres of yearly rent for his patrimony *. But Matthieu, in his hiſtory of Henry IV. affirms, that the Bourbon family then poſſeſſed a revenue of eight hundred thouſand livres in land from the viſcounty of Narbonne, which was a very conſiderable appenage. Yet Lewis prince of Conde had certainly a very ſmall moiety of it, when he ſerved as a colonel of infantry in Piedmont †; and the cardinal of Lorain was underſtood to mock his poverty, when he ſent him a thouſand crowns for the expences of his embaſſy to the catholic king.

Their friends meet together at Vendoſme.

SOON after it was known that the king of Navarre had ſtopt at Vendoſme, a conſiderable number of the principal nobility, ſome of them the kindred and allies of the princes of Bourbon, who regarded their blood as a honourable inducement to eſpouſe their intereſt, repaired thither. The chief perſons preſent were, the prince of Conde, and of la Roche-Sur-Yon, D'Andelot, the Vidame of Chartres, and ſome lords of the Montmorency family. The unprecedented and boundleſs authority which the Guiſes had aſſumed, and the arrogance they already ſhewed in the exertion of it, was the great ſubject of conference ‡. It was alledged, that the honours of the princes of Bourbon, and the very ſhew of their dignity, were inſolently invaded by them; and that of this a public inſtance appeared, when the king made his firſt proceſſion in mourning; at which, while they, along with other princes of the blood, according to the ſtated order of the court, carried his train, the duke of Guiſe intruded himſelf between them, and performed the office as his inconteſtible province. They all concurred

* Matth. tom. ii. p. 1 and 2.
† Addit aux Caſtel. tom. ii. p. 611.
‡ Thuan. ibid. p. 465.

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in the ſame opinion, as to the juſt ground they had to reſent the indignities ſuffered by the princes, and to provide againſt the thraldom which the Guiſes ſeemed to be preparing for them, and the chief of the French nobility. The only difference among them was about the courſe to be taken for redreſs. In the diſcuſſion of this point, they ſhew different ſentiments according to their perſonal tempers and characters *, which operate more forcibly upon men in ſuch conſultations, than their general principles of government. Thoſe who were vehement in their opinions, and reſolutely inclined, propoſed to have immediate recourſe to arms. Others, who were leſs precipitant, and averſe to raſh meaſures, argued againſt the propriety and neceſſity of an open rupture with the court, and adviſed the more eligible and ſafer method of ſolicitation and addreſs. It appears that the propoſal to arm themſelves directly, flowed from the perſonal hatred and party rage which many entertained againſt the Guiſes, whoſe uncontrouled influence upon a young and weak prince, and the ſuppoſed partiality of their deſigns and counſels, their adverſaries figured in their imaginations to portend inevitable prejudice to them, and diſgrace to the ſtate. But calmer reaſon eaſily prevailed againſt this burſt of indignation. It was evident, that by violent meaſures they would incur the reproach of diſloyalty, and while they raiſed a combuſtion in the ſtate, without attempting to repreſent the grounds of their procedure; the equity and rectitude of their pretenſions, as well as their views and purpoſes, might juſtly be called in queſtion †. The king of Navarre declared, that to avoid all appearances of turbulent deſigns, he was reſolved not to ſet out on his journey to the court, until the time for their performing the obſequies of the late

* D'Avila, ibid.

† Thuan. ibid. p. 466.

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king was elapſed; when it would immediately appear, in what manner the Guiſes meant to conduct themſelves from the reception and treatment they gave the conſtable Montmorency. Thus it was determined to remit the matter in agitation to a trial of his influence and management at court, whoſe rank as firſt prince of the blood intitled him to immediate admiſſion to the king, and ſuch acceſs to the queen mother as might be improved to diſengage her from attachment to the Guiſes, and procure the advancement of his family and adherents to their honours and privileges.

They agree to refer the management of their intereſt to Anthony of Bourbon.

AT this meeting de Thou obſerves in general, that ſome of the ſpeeches were remarkable for freedom and boldneſs, and others no leſs guarded by moderation and prudence. It is certain that the extremes in each way, by not being avoided, had brought them at laſt to an improper concluſion. The want of attention to the ſenſe and import of the conſtable's advice, or diffidence of it, may reaſonably be deemed the misfortune and wreck of their counſels. He had, early, urged the king of Navarre to preſent himſelf immediately at the court, and aſſume that place about the perſon of the young king, which all parties knew belonged to his quality and rank. The queen mother was then in a ſtate of ſuſpence, and uncertain to what party ſhe ought to adhere. She had, at the time of this aſſembly at Vendoſme, taken ſome meaſures for confirming her ſcheme of coalition with the Guiſes, and eſtabliſhing the fabric of a conjunct authority with them: but the face of things was ſtill very doubtful, and the judgment of emergencies precarious. The appearance of the firſt prince of the blood of France, in this critical opportunity, attended by ſuch a train of the nobility as was uſual in his progreſs to the court, could hardly have failed to pro-

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July 18. The conſtable Montmorency retires from the court.

Henry's obſequies being finiſhed ſeveral days before the cuſtomary period, the king was conducted to St. Germain in Laye. The queen mother, afraid of the diſturbance and intruſion of the oppoſite party, ſtill wanted a quiet time and opportunity to proceed in her political purpoſes. But the ſcene of ambiguous conduct could be no longer protracted. The report of the king of Navarre's intention to come to court had alarmed them; and the conſtable repaired directly thither from the royal ſepulchre at St. Denis. Francis's firſt reception of him was cold and indifferent. Montmorency, deſirous to learn preſently what he had to expect, took occaſion to recommend his nephews, the two Colignis, as perſons that merited his royal favour; and who, by ſharing his confidence, would ſhew themſelves qualified to ſupport his government. The king ſeemed not diſpleaſed, and ſpoke favourably of

* Matthieu, ibid. p. 210. † D'Avila, ibid. P. Daniel, tom. v. p. 638.

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the admiral Coligni. But, when the conſtable turned the diſcourſe upon himſelf, Francis told him that, as it ſeemed unſuitable to overload his age with continual toil in public affairs, the duke of Guiſe and the cardinal of Lorain had been entruſted by him with the whole adminiſtration, but that he ſhould find a vacant ſeat in the council, when his health permitted his attendance. The old miniſter perceiving that Francis had been leſſoned by the Guiſes to pronounce his diſmiſſion in this manner, forgot the ſtile of the court before a pupil king, whoſe father and grandfather in the moſt illuſtrious times of their reigns, had honoured him with their regard and confidence *. He proudly replied, "That whatever the ſtate of his health and age might be, the ſenſe of what he had been, and of what he was, could never ſuffer ſubjection to thoſe, who formerly uſed to receive his commands; and, therefore, he choſe no caſual admiſſion to the council; but that, whenever his majeſty ſhould require his ſervice, he hoped to teſtify, by the readineſs and vigour of his obedience, that years had not much impaired his abilities, either in the cabinet or in the field." He immediately aſked leave of abſence, and retired to Chantilli. The court party, by this time, had reaſon to wiſh and procure his removal. Diſſatisfied with him, and diſtruſtful of his counſels, as Anthony of Navarre appeared to be, their coalition became of itſelf natural and neceſſary. An interview at court might have fixed their union and friendſhip. By preventing it, a conſiderable advantage was gained by the adverſaries of the princes of Bourbon.

The conſtable had left the court, and the prince of Conde was was gone upon his embaſſy, when the king of Navarre ſet out from

* Thuan. ibid. Matth. ibid.

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Anthony of Navarre is ungraciouſly received there, and ſuffers himſelf to be impoſed upon.

Vendoſme, to make the experiment of the temper of the queen mother and her aſſociates, with reſpect to him, and to claim his rank in the government*. There are few examples of men, with a like degree of perſonal courage and ambition, and even the ſhare of judgment which this prince had, who have ſhewn themſelves ſo much diſqualified for action, and the management of intereſting affairs. As he could not at firſt ſhake off his natural inactivity and heſitation; ſo now, when his pride prompted him to appear, unſeaſonably, at court, for the vindication of his dignity, he proceeded with the ſame remiſſneſs and diffidence. The court party, as if they had reckoned upon foiling his reſolution by the preludes of an ungracious reception, began with treating him, upon his arrival, with undecent marks of diſreſpect. The princes of the blood were always met, upon their approaching the court, by ſome of the nobility, who attended there; but this honour was not done to the king of Navarre. They had lodgings aſſigned them, according to their rank, within the precincts of the court: but the firſt apartments of the caſtle, near to the king's, were poſſeſſed by the duke of Guiſe, who refuſed to reſign what he occupied by his majeſty's allowance and favour. The diſhonour, according to the ideas of thoſe times, was ſuch as would have juſtified the departure of the king of Navarre, without making his obeiſance to the young ſovereign. He was upon the point of quitting St. Germain with indignation, when the marſhal St. Andre, by offering to accommodate him with the apartments he had, and taking pains to calm the firſt heat of his paſſion, prevailed with him to ſtay, and make his appearance before the king. As his introduction at court, and the audiences he had of Francis, were viſibly directed by the Guiſes,

* Addit. aux Caſtel. liv. iii. ibid.

and

and conducted with reſerve and formality, ſimilar to the indecency of his reception, ſeveral of the nobility, who accompanied the king of Navarre, adviſed his breaking off this ignominious courſe of ſolicitation, which tended to increaſe the pride of his enemies; and by openly aſſerting his claim to authority in the government under the arbitration of the States General, to impreſs the Guiſes with the dread of an immediate combination of the French nobility againſt the court. This was certainly what he might have done, without running into great danger; and many retainers of the court expected nothing leſs from the firſt prince of the blood, when affronted and vilified by an Italian princeſs, and two brothers of a foreign family. But Anthony's chief adviſers were people whoſe counſels ſuited better with his own genius *. Some of them were ſuſpected to have been gained over by the Guiſes, and none were inclined to proceed to extremities with the court. But the murmur of many of his party could not be quite ſuppreſſed. He found himſelf obliged to aſſume the air of reſolution and ſpirit. After ſeveral interviews with the king, in which the plaineſt ſymptoms of averſion and prejudice againſt his pretenſions to vie with the Guiſes in authority, were diſcovered; he ſet out for Paris, with the ſuppoſed deſign of engaging the preſidents of parliament, and the leading men in the city, to eſpouſe his intereſt. It was already notorious there, how he had allowed himſelf to be ſcorned and vilified at court. People had no incitement to warmth and zeal in the cauſe of one, who himſelf ſhewed ſo much tameneſs and indifference, while the emiſſaries of the Guiſes were buſy in employing the various artifices of threats and promiſes. The king of Navarre was aſtoniſhed at the ſhyneſs of ſome, and the coolneſs

* Thuan. Ibid. D'Avila.

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of others to his intereſt, of which he was the cauſe and the example; and returned back, more mortified after this weak and improper eſſay of his influence than he had been with his treatment at court.

Notwithstanding the king of Navarre appeared, by the whole of his conduct, to expoſe himſelf to the inſults of his adverſaries, there was ſomething too groſs in the diſreſpect ſhewn him, to be reliſhed by many of the courtiers themſelves. It was the queen mother's part to rectify this exceſs, to which her aſſociates had carried their behaviour, and ſhe ſeized that time, and uſed that addreſs, which was moſt adapted to obtain her end. She ſaw, that, diſappointed and irritated as he might be, he was capable, from temper, of being kept from reſentment by proper management; and in the preſent criſis of affairs, of being diverted from inſiſting upon his rank in the government. She took occaſion to mention her concern, that his reception at court had been in any reſpect offenſive to him. She confeſſed that, from the delicacy of ſpirit natural to the king her ſon, he had been agitated with what he underſtood the king of Navarre's demand would be, with reſpect to the adminiſtration; which, being lately adjuſted according to his pleaſure, could not, inſtantly, be changed, without many obvious inconveniencies. She gave him the ſtrongeſt aſſurances that a ſhort time would be ſufficient to diſcover her amicable intentions toward the princes of Bourbon, whoſe pretenſions to be employed in the management of the ſtate ſhe owned herſelf ſo fully convinced of, that ſhe would willingly take their cauſe upon herſelf, and engage to procure them all reaſonable and juſt ſatisfaction. Having ſignified how much it became him, in conſiſtency with his character for prudence and moderation, and with his dignity,

dignity, as firſt prince of the blood, to act upon the principles of loyalty and deference to the king, rather than to hearken to factious counſels; ſhe then remembered him that his hopes of the reſtitution of the kingdom of Navarre were not ſo deſperate, as to render it a matter of indifference, how his conduct, on this occaſion, might be approved by the court of Spain, and concluded with adviſing him to embrace an honourable occaſion of ſoliciting his cauſe with that crown; when the princeſs Elizabeth, contracted to the catholic king, was ſoon to be conducted into that kingdom; which office, if he would undertake, ſhe promiſed that all the king's intereſt ſhould be uſed to proſecute the negotiation, and bring it to a ſucceſsful iſſue.

Auguſt.

The king of Navarre was now invited to take his ſeat at the council-table. What ſeemed to be done in honour of him proceeded, altogether, from a political view. The king of Spain's letters, in anſwer to the queen mother's application to him for aſſiſtance againſt heretics, and all diſturbers of the tranquillity of the government, were produced and read in his preſence. They contained a declaration that, in caſe any party preſumed to controul the adminiſtration, preſently eſtabliſhed, all neceſſary ſupplies of men and money ſhould be furniſhed from Spain, in order to chaſtize ſuch rebellion *. It was this aſſurance from the court of Spain that rendered the Guiſes and their party ſo hardy and ſupercilious. Conſidered in a juſt light, the ſolicitation of it was rather an argument of the timidity of the court party. It was a diſhonourable ſubmiſſion of the domeſtic diſſentions of France, even before they became manifeſt, to the arbitration of the catholic

* Thuan. ibid. p. 467.

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king, which proved afterwards the ſcourge of the kingdom. It might have furniſhed the king of Navarre with a reaſonable objection to a compliance with the meaſures of the court, but with him it was juſtly ſuppoſed the impreſſion of the device would be very different. Embarraſſed at every ſtep he took, jealous of his friends, who dreaded his flexibility, and now allured by the enticing offers of the queen mother, he eaſily reverted to the former imaginary hopes of his vanity, and, inſtead of attempting to tread further in the liſts of faction, was glad of a plauſible pretext to retreat from them, and embrace the propoſal of a negotiation with Spain, for the recovery or exchange of Navarre. He propoſed only to continue till the ceremony of Francis's coronation was performed; that his agreement with the court, and the king's diſpoſition to ſupport his intereſt, might not be called in queſtion.

Queen Catharine, who threw out this bait for him, took care afterwards to finiſh the artifice, by engaging the Spaniſh court to favour it. The duke of Alva, and other grandees appointed to receive the princeſs upon the confines of Spain, having got proper inſtructions for the purpoſe, appeared to admit the juſtice of the king of Navarre's claim upon the catholic king, for the long expected reparation, but they always evaded a poſitive concluſion*. After the ſhew of a treaty, intended only to amuſe and protract time, the king of Navarre, without the acquiſition of any thing but freſh hopes, and repeated aſſurances of the regard which the Spaniſh monarch would pay to his intereſt, in the end was prevailed upon to ſend an envoy to Madrid to attend the buſineſs, whilſt he retired to his territory of Bearn, and expected the event.

* D'Avila.

Unfortunate

Unfortunate, as he deſerved to be, in ſuffering himſelf to be flattered and impoſed on by this fallacious project, and blameable in abandoning the honour and intereſt of his family, and of his party in France; his tardy and ſpiritleſs conduct gave an early and ſenſible wound to both, and afforded ſufficient ground to the Guiſes and their adherents at court, to triumph in ſo palpable a diſcovery of the want of reſolution, ſteadineſs and vigour, in the chief of the princes of Bourbon, whoſe title to authority and intereſt in the government, when placed in oppoſition to their own, they had reaſon to dread as formidable and dangerous.

The king of Navarre's friends are diſperſed by his behaviour.

THE Guiſes having thus baffled the king of Navarre, proceeded with more leiſure to plot the demolition of his party, by endeavouring to ſow diſcord among ſuch of his adherents as were moſt likely to re-animate him to contend for a ſhare in the government. Of theſe the moſt conſiderable were the three Colignis, nephews of the conſtable Montmorency, whoſe niece Eleanor de Roye, the prince of Conde had married. Gaſpard de Coligny, the ſecond brother, beſides the poſſeſſion of two provincial governments, was veſted with the rank of admiral of France.

Character of Coligni, the admiral, and of others of Anthony's party.

HIS military and political genius emulated that of the greateſt men in any age or nation. Fortitude and bravery in him exemplified in the higheſt degree, ſeemed only the natural altitude, not the effort of his mind; the general outline, not the full exhibition of his character. Formed by nature for great undertakings, his uncommon capacity was ſoon perceived; and men read, in what they ſaw of his firſt appearances in the army, the future pitch and extent of his abilities. With the mixture of ambition, inſeparable from a great mind, he cheriſhed a predominant love to

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He was one of the few men in France who, besides a principle of honesty and conscience in religion, had penetration sufficient to support him in the political conviction, that the apparent inconveniencies of tolerating the protestant opinions would not only vanish in time, but that the internal quiet and the outward grandeur of France, at that period, required that public liberty of conscience should be granted by the government. His brother, Francis D'Andelot Chatillon, who was distinguished by his valour in the late reign, and promoted to the rank of colonel of the French infantry, had endowments and vigour of mind similar to those of the admiral. Irregular and more precipitant in his resolutions and actions; deficient in steadiness and dignity of character; he was an able general; daring, active, and prompt in enterprize; capable of seizing or creating occasions to favour and promote his aims and purposes. Their eldest brother, Odet, bishop of Beauvais, and cardinal of Chatillon, concurred with them both in religious and political sentiments. His peculiarity of character will appear in a subsequent part of the history. When the young king was conducted from St. Germain to the city of Rheims, in order to his coronation, the duke of Guise entertained the whole

* Addit. aux Castel. tom. i. p. 371.

court

court at his country ſeat of Nanteuil, which lay on the road thither *. He took this opportunity, when he ſhewed civilities and complaiſance to all the courtiers, to inſinuate to the admiral Coligni, in the way of particular confidence, that the prince of Conde was ſoliciting the king for the government of Picardy, which he held together with that of the Iſle of France, upon the ſuppoſition that what his father had enjoyed he ought to inherit, and that it was unſuitable for the admiral to pretend to retain them both. The intended impreſſion of reſentment was communicated to Coligni, who thought it diſhonourable to have his government pilfered from him, without his privacy to the application for it. But he quickly ſuſpected the deſign of the narrative; and finding it to be altogether a miſrepreſentation, he agreed with the prince of Conde to make the reſignation of Picardy, and to have it intimated publicly, that it was done from propriety, and with a ſpecial view to his advancement. The deceit and partiality of the Guiſes became manifeſt. All the ſolicitation that could be uſed for the prince was ineffectual. Their ſcheme was not to ſtrip the admiral for his benefit. They intended the gift for Charles de Coſſeé, the marſhal Briſac, whom they deſired to fix in their intereſt. The gracefulneſs of his perſon, as well as his military merit, rendered him a favourite in the late reign. By long acquaintance with the art of war in Italy, he acquired the reputation of being the beſt bred, and moſt intelligent captain in the army. He had not always experienced the friendſhip of the Guiſes, but they ſtudied to oblige him, now, when he might be ſubſervient to their intereſt.

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FRANCIS's inauguration was ſolemnized on the eighteenth of September; the unction, which was principal part of the cere- Sept. 18.

* Thuan. ibid. p. 468.

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monial, being performed by the cardinal of Lorain, as archbiſhop of Rheims. The king made a compliment of the ſovereignty of Bar, which was a fief of the crown, to Charles duke of Lorain, who had come with his ſpouſe, Francis's ſiſter, to honour the coronation. By the Guiſes advice, he was no leſs laviſh of an antient badge of eminence in the kingdom, that of the knighthood of St. Michael. Lewis XI. had inſtituted this order near a hundred years before, when the monarchical authority needed to be ſupported by all the ſubſidiary advices that princes could invent to engage the independent lords to reverence and ſubmiſſion to the royalty. The king himſelf was the chief and ſovereign of the order *. The number of the knights, who were to be noble by birth, renowned in arms, and of unſtained honour, was then limited to thirty-ſix. Lewis had the mortification to ſee the honour of it ſcorned, both by the duke of Burgundy and the duke of Bretagne, who conſidered it as one of the political ſtratagems of this monarch.

Knights of St. Michael created at Francis's inauguration.

It continued in high repute in the kingdom till Henry II.'s time, when the favourite ladies of the court began to diſgrace it, by obtaining grants for the ſale of the knighthood. The Guiſes, who underſtood the policy of the inſtitution, and knew how to apply it to their purpoſes, as well as Lewis, without regarding the dignity of it, eaſily availed with Francis to make, at once, the creation of eighteen knights. An old chevalier, who ſaw with indignation the order proſtituted, took occaſion to ſay, that the golden badge which the knights wore about their necks, inſtead of being appropriated to brave men, was now made the collar

* Brantome du marſhal de Tavannes. Mezerai abbrege, tom. iv. p. 601.

of

of all beaſts. It appears that the knights of the order were always called to the conventions of the notables, and, ſometimes, exerciſed a kind of judicial authority over thoſe of their body accuſed of diſloyalty. The credit of the knighthood being much ſunk; Henry III. twenty years after this, inſtituted the order of the Holy Ghoſt.

Montmorency reſigns the place of grand maſter of the palace.

THE Guiſes having ſo far ſucceeded in eſtabliſhing their authority, became leſs ſcrupulous about the manner of treating their opponents. They inſiſted that the conſtable Montmorency ſhould ſurrender the office of grand maſter of the palace, which the duke of Guiſe had in vain ſolicited in the late reign, and the ſurvivancy of which Henry had promiſed to Francis de Montmorency, the conſtable's eldeſt ſon, upon his marriage with his natural daughter. The conſtable at firſt ſhewed reluctance and oppoſition to this demand *. But finding the court to be reſolute in carrying the point, he accepted a compromize offered by the queen mother, and reſigned the place of grand maſter, upon his ſon being appointed a marſhal of France. It muſt be obſerved, however, that diſpoſed as the Guiſes were to puſh their animoſity againſt the family of Montmorency, and obſtinate in excluding the princes of Bourbon from the adminiſtration, they ſtill acted with reſerve, and a degree of moderation, in diveſting them of their offices. The king of Navarre held his government of Guienne upon the footing it was put in Henry's reign. The conſtable's office remained with Montmorency. The admiral Coligni, beſides the poſſeſſion of his rank, and the government of the Iſle of France, was even admitted to ſome confidence at court. Yet, ſuch was the antipathy of many

* Matth. ibid. p. 209. D'Avila, ibid.

againſt

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againſt the Guiſes, that meaſures leſs cautious would have thrown the government into immediate confuſion. By the courſe they purſued, which was not altogether ſo artificial as the queen mother adviſed, the ſtruggle of faction was allayed for a time, and the views of the party leaders kept in ſuſpenſe, until other incidents co-operated to excite the ſpirit of oppoſition.

THE fatal event of Henry's death is ſaid to have been regarded by many of the proteſtant converts as an act of divine vengeance exerted in their behalf. Many affirmed, and Beza and others have wrote *, that the king, when mortally wounded, expreſſed a fearful anxiety of mind, on account of his cruelty in the perſecutions for religion; and that the cardinal of Lorain ſtifled his remorſe, by aſſuring him it aroſe from the ſuggeſtion of the devil. Such credulity was natural to people in their ſituation. Beſides ſome reſpite of their ſufferings, which they hoped to attain, there was reaſon to imagine, from the circumſtances of government, and the ſtate of parties in the new reign, that many, who hitherto ſtood in awe of the royal diſpleaſure, would diſcover the freedom of their ſentiments in religion, and dare openly to eſpouſe their principles. The names of the members of the court of parliament, who had lately oppoſed the perſecutions, were reſpectable, and gave reputation to that cauſe which they ſo reſolutely defended. As the moſt eminent perſons in the ſtate were known to favour the proteſtant opinions, it was preſumed that their influence would avail to procure them protection. The king of Navarre was believed, from conjugal perſuaſion, to have gone ſome length toward converſion. The prince of Conde had a manifeſt propenſity to engage in patronizing the ſuffering party. The admiral Coligni, as well as his brother d'Andelot, had

The princes of Bourbon are inclined to favour the proteſtants, and to profeſs their religion.

* Thuan. lib. xxii. p. 462.

a par-

a particular attachment to the new tenets. But all of them, by going to maſs, ſtill maintained conformity to the church, and only gave room to believe, that in certain emergencies they would aſſume a different character.

And the Guiſes are ſtill more tenacious of the catholic ſyſtem.

BUT the Guiſes, in their preſent exaltation, were animated more than ever to adhere to the rigid and ſanguinary principles of the catholic church, and to demonſtrate that their profeſſed enmity to heretics and ſectaries aroſe in proportion to the height of their fortune. Senſible of the honour and reputation they had already reaped from the purſuit of this their favourite plan, they now ſeemed to be abundantly conſcious of the advantages it preſented before them. To brand their opponents in France with the odious name of heretics; to conciliate the friendſhip and aid of Philip II. of Spain, a monarch no leſs bigotted than powerful and wealthy; to merit the favour and applauſe of the court of Rome, when its ſpiritual domination was endangered; were the views which both their intereſt and ambition impelled them to follow. As it was of the utmoſt conſequence to ſecure the favour of the clergy, whoſe influence in the parliament of Paris was very great, they took the earlieſt opportunity to ſignalize their religious zeal, and to act in their profeſſed character of guardians of the honour of the catholic church, both at home and abroad.

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CHAP. II.

Foreign affairs — Revival of the perſecutions of the proteſtants in France — Controverſy about the legality of the Guiſes power and the king's majority — Trial and condemnation of Anne du Bourg — Proſecutions of ſeveral counſellors of the parliament — Severities againſt the proteſtants increaſed — Vacancy of the ſee of Rome.

They endeavour to ſupport the catholic religion in Scotland.

IN Scotland the Guiſes judged it highly neceſſary to uſe their greateſt efforts to confound and ruin the progreſs of the reformation. If to make this attempt may be reckoned for the intereſt of France, it is certain that the time, the manner, and the method of doing it were ſo ill calculated, as to bring diſhonour and diſappointment upon its authors. The antient alliance with the Scots had proved extremely uſeful, and often advantageous to the French nation. It was the wiſdom and true policy of the latter to manage the temper of the Scots, to treat them altogether upon the equal footing of friends and allies; and, eſpecially, to avoid puſhing meaſures with them that might derogate from the natural idea of their own independence. This was, undoubtedly, the beſt hold which could be took of Scotland by the French, againſt England; whoſe pretenſions to ſuperiority over them in the way of power or conqueſt, had, chiefly, drove the Scotch nation to perpetual variance with that kingdom. Notwithſtanding the crown of Scotland was now worn by Francis, as the heritage of his royal conſort Mary, the political ſtate of that kingdom was the ſame, and in all reſpects unaltered by this connexion. To maintain and ſtrengthen this new bond of union, the ſame attention and care, not to diſguſt the people, or alarm them with the apprehenſions of being ſubject

to

to foreigners, was neceſſary on the part of France. In the preſent conjuncture, particular moderation, and delicacy of conduct, was extremely requiſite to prevent the Scottiſh lords, who favoured the reformation, from turning their eyes to the queen of England for protection and aſſiſtance. From conſiderable experience of the temper and genius of the Scots, and her own wiſe reflexions, Mary of Guiſe, who acted as regent of Scotland, had been juſtly directed to this political management*. She had ſeveral times, without making dangerous trials of her authority, pacifyed the commotions of the kingdom on account of religion. Though the inſtigation of her brothers in France, had obliged her to make ſome infraction of her promiſes, which diminiſhed the efficacy of her moderate counſels, and weakened her own credit; ſhe had ſo far ſecured the quiet of the ſtate, by granting the public exerciſe of the reformed religion, that the proteſtant party, or thoſe who were called the lords of the congregation, not only teſtified all due and loyal ſubmiſſion, but concurred in maintaining her influence and authority in the adminiſtration of the kingdom.

The ſtate of Scotland and other foreign kingdoms, with reſpect to religion.

Matters ſtood in this pacific poſture, when letters came to her, from Francis and Mary, directing her to keep no terms with the heretical party. The pretence for it was, that the queen's baſtard brother, the earl of Murray, one of the chief perſonages among the reformers, was ſuſpected of aſpiring to the crown. Though the allegation was altogether void of truth and probability, and the queen regent was ſenſible how the quick reverſe of her counſels and conduct would remarkably expoſe her own reputation, and alienate the minds of the people from their allegiance, ſhe could not

* Thuan. lib. xxiv. p. 491.

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help complying with ſuperior authority. A thouſand French ſoldiers were ſent as a reinforcement to the garriſon of Leith, and the citadel and town were ordered to be fortified and ſtored with proviſions. This being done, the queen regent ſhut herſelf up there, with the French troops, and ſome Scottiſh partizans, as if ſhe meant to defy and provoke the aſſaults of thoſe to whom ſhe had lately granted a treaty of peace. If there had been no previous conteſt, this prelude of war, attended with the expulſion of the townſmen, and the forrage of the neighbourhood, was ſufficient to excite the jealouſy of a people accuſtomed to fly to arms. The confederated lords prepared to beſiege Leith, without being furniſhed with materials proper for the enterprize. A ſecond armament conſiſting of two thouſand French infantry, which arrived at Leith under the command of de Broſſe, a knight of the order of St. Michael, rendered the ſiege impracticable to the tumultuous and unſkilful aſſailants. But while the French made a gallant ſhow of military proweſs and conduct, they only inflamed the reſentment of their adverſaries. The propoſals made to the Scottiſh chieftains to ſubmit, were as much ſcorned by them as the miſſion of the biſhop of Amiens, and ſome doctors of the Sorbonne, who came in the expedition to combat their errors in religion, was ridiculed. The town ſtill reſiſted all aſſaults; but the nobles entered into more unanimous reſolutions to impugn and ſubvert the queen regent's authority; and, which was more pernicious than if they had made themſelves maſters of Leith, they at length had recourſe to England for aſſiſtance. This produced a treaty with queen Elizabeth, from which various conſequences aroſe, that were equally prejudicial to the intereſt of France, and to the royal authority in Scotland.

The

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Of the Netherlands and Spain.

The catholick king, in the end of Auguſt, took his departure for Spain out of the Belgic provinces; the government of which he committed to his natural ſiſter Margaret dutcheſs of Parma. The air and manners of the Low Country people, which were reliſhed by his father Charles V. proved offenſive to the contracted temper, and ſupercilious pride of the Spaniſh monarch †. In the petitions preſented to the convention of the ſtates by the deputies of the provinces and cities, againſt the maintenance of foreign ſoldiers, and in the declared averſion of the people to have any but natives admitted into the great council; Philip ſaw and dreaded the eruptions of that preſumptuous ſpirit of liberty, which had exerciſed his father's aſſiduity and vigilance to keep it within bounds. Many things were apprehended by him, from the nature of the government, and the ſituation of the Netherlands; which, whilſt they were favourable to commerce, and the reſort of ſtrangers, encouraged the bent of the people to freedom and independency. At preſent, moſt of all he feared the growth of hereſy, which being in its natural aſpect ſufficiently terrible to him, he believed would, in this rank ſoil and nurſery of freedom, be ſoon transformed into rebellion. Having however compoſed the face of public affairs, in the beſt manner he could for the time, and appointed Granvel the biſhop of Arras, to be chief counſellor to the governeſs, he made his voyage to Spain. His entry into that kingdom was ſolemnized by the condemnation of many impriſoned for religious apoſtacy, to the ſtake and the flames ‡. At Seville, Valladolid, and other cities, thoſe victims waited his progreſs; and the ſpectacle of men of antient families, of eccleſiaſtics, and women, ſome of them in the prime of youth, doomed to be burnt

† Strada de Bello Belg. lib. i.

‡ Thuan. lib. xxiii. p. 477.

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alive, became part of the public welcome to the ſovereign. The inhuman ſcene was further improved in the caſe of Conſtance Ponce, who had been confeſſor or preacher to Charles V. The infamy and ſufferings of a priſon, to which he had been condemned, and which ended his life, were not thought a proper vindictive judgment for the crime of hereſy, of which he had been accuſed. A grizly figure of him was made, and carried about the ſtreets; and after being ſportfully arraigned, was formally conſigned to the fire. The gloomy and virulent diſpoſition of Philip to ſtigmatize heretics, even when, as in this inſtance, it aſperſed the memory of his father, rendered it credible that he had ſcruples about allowing Charles's bones to reſt in the tomb, without undergoing the cenſure of the inquiſitorial tribunal. But as it inferred dangerous conſequences to prove his father a heretic, he thought perhaps, that the reduplication of zeal in the ſon, was a neceſſary and ſufficient compenſation for the defects of it, with which his fire was chargeable. The empire of the inquiſitors, which he ſo much favoured in Spain, and laboured to promote in the Low Countries, continued ſtable and flouriſhing, according to his wiſhes, in all the dominions of that monarchy, long after its purſuit of univerſal empire had proved fallacious and abortive.

Of Germany.

In Germany, where, upon Charles's renunciation of the imperial crown Ferdinand I. had been elected emperor; the conceſſions made to the proteſtant princes about religion, and the adherence to the ſame moderate counſels, of which his brother ſet the firſt example, had in a great meaſure terminated the diſſentions of the Germanic body. The emperor only wiſhed, and entertained ſome faint hopes, that the proteſtant princes might be prevailed upon

upon to remit the determination of ſome religious points to the authority of the general council held at Trent, in the pontificature of Paul III. and of Julius III; the reaſſembly of which, on account of the wars that enſued, had been ſuſpended. He was determined, however, by no means to reinflame former conteſts; but by inſiſting only upon ſuch propoſals of union as might be made in an amicable way, to perſevere in his pacific ſyſtem, the happy effects of which he had already experienced. The refuſal of Paul IV. to confirm his election, upon the pretext that Charles's abdication had not been authoriſed by the pope, tended to render *Ferdinand more indifferent to the remonſtrances of the court of Rome. He ordered his ambaſſador, who was refuſed an audience in form, to make the cuſtomary proteſtations, and retire from Rome in three days. Though the pope's opiniatry was diſapproved by moſt of the chriſtian princes, he perſiſted in it till his death. This rule of unflexible obſtinacy in all their pretenſions, which the popes had formerly found means of turning to their advantage, began now to fail of its efficacy. 1559.

Of England.

In England, from the time that Henry VIII. had thrown off the papal ſupremacy, and retrenched the ſyſtem of the hierarchy, ſeveral revolutions in the eccleſiaſtical ſtate of the kingdom had enſued. By that monarch's caprice, by Edward's youth and tenderneſs of heart, and Mary's bigotry, various alterations had been made in the public ſtandards of faith, and in the worſhip, uſages, and diſcipline of the church. Theſe religious changes had been produced without the diſtraction or prejudice of the

* Thuan. lib. xxi. p. 431. Hiſtoire de l'Empire par Huſs, tom. i. liv. iii. p. 314.

civil

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civil authority, the powers of which were rather more invigorated and enlarged by this new exerciſe of eccleſiaſtical juriſdiction. Again the tide of antient ſuperſtition was ſtemmed at queen Elizabeth's acceſſion; and the reformed ſyſtem of religion, ſo much dreaded by other monarchs as the bane of civil government, was reſumed, and fixed in a manner conducive to the public welfare, and advantageous to royalty. Yet the old rules of popery, which had formerly ſtruck ſo deep, and ſtill remained in ſeveral corners of the kingdom, required Elizabeth's circumſpection and vigilance to repreſs their virulence. The popiſh votaries, from many valid reaſons bore their hopes high. The late ſudden revolutions in religion, the proſpect of the ſucceſſion of the crown to Mary queen of France and Scotland, the ſuperior grandeur and ſtrength of the popiſh princes in Europe, who appeared to unite more firmly in defence of the catholic church, and for the demolition of her enemies, contributed to flatter and intoxicate the minds of this party in England. Elizabeth knew her ſituation, and had that compaſs of political wiſdom, which was adapted to the delicacy of it. Her firſt and principal care was to engage the hearts of her ſubjects at home, and to add reputation and ſtrength to her government, by addreſs and vigour in all her public reſolutions. The early attention ſhe payed to the affairs of Scotland, ſhowed that ſhe well underſtood how to make the firſt eſſay of her power, with the leaſt danger, and to the beſt advantage.

This was the condition of the principal powers in Europe; and ſuch the contraſt they formed to each other, from the varied feature of religion, when the Guiſes fixed themſelves at the helm of affairs in France; whoſe plan of adminiſtration, conſidered as relative to the great ſyſtem, was no other than that which had

been

been chalked out to Henry II. at the general peace. It was wholly directed to a coalition with Philip, and the ſubverſion of hereticks. By it the views of the Spaniſh monarch were more effectually promoted, than the intereſt and welfare of France. But, as Philip's ſyſtem was calculated for the aggrandizement of his power in Europe, ſo the Guiſes found the imitation of it highly conducive to their influence in that kingdom. Therefore the revival of the proceſſes commenced againſt thoſe counſellors of parliament, who had pleaded for the ſuſpenſion of the penal ſtatutes, and were impeached in the late reign, became one of the firſt acts of their adminiſtration.

The execution of the penal ſtatutes revived by the Guiſes.

To give a proper edge to the minds of the people, upon the ſubject of ſuch trials, private informations about what paſſed in the clandeſtine meetings held in the city by thoſe of the perſecuted faith, were received and encouraged †. Some tradeſmen, and apprentices of mechanicks, of baſe characters, who pretended to have been for ſome time diſciples of the proteſtants, and to have haunted their conventicles, were induced to ſwear that they concluded with a ſcene of promiſcuous lewdneſs. Anthony du Mouchy, the inquiſitor of the faith, and the preſident St. Andre, without diſtruſting the veracity of ſuch witneſſes, or queſtioning the credibility of their hideous aſſertions, carried them directly before the cardinal of Lorain, by whom they were introduced to the preſence of the queen mother. The infamous intelligence was ſufficient to raiſe the utmoſt abhorrence of the proteſtants. The groſs calumny flew abroad, and with many prepoſterous circumſtances, was generally believed. The chancellor Oliver, too wiſe and unpre-

† Memoires de Caſtlenau, liv. i. D'Aubigne, liv. i. chap. 15.

judiced

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judiced not to ſuſpect the palpable fiction, thought it neceſſary and juſt, to call the vouchers of it to a more particular examination. When confronted by ſome perſons of note, whom they named as preſent at a meeting in an advocate's houſe, in the place of Maubert, they were preſently convicted, from their own prevarications, of flagrant treachery and impoſture. But from the general propenſity of people to credit the calumny, this detection was rendered of little ſignificance. The houſes to which the proteſtants privately reſorted, were pointed by the informers; and a ſearch being made in different parts of the city, men and women in large companies were hurried away to the jails. A great many deſerted their families to avoid the danger. The moveable goods of ſuch were ſeized and expoſed to public ſale; and after being thrice ſummoned, if they did not appear, their houſes alſo were ſequeſtered. The pitiful condition of ſome children, and infants left behind by their parents, whoſe tender cries were heard along the ſtreets, ſo far completed this public ſcene of depredation and miſery, that few of the moſt unrelenting catholicks could avoid being affected with it. The example of the capital was followed by other cities in the kingdom. At Thouloufe ‡, and Narbon, in Languedoc; at Aix in Provence, Poicters, and other places, orders were iſſued for a ſtrict inquiry after all ſuſpected of apoſtatizing from the faith. Ravage, confiſcations, and impriſonments, were the lot of numbers of innocent families, who were equally expoſed to the inſults and abuſe of the populace, and to the ſeverity of penal edicts. The cardinal of Lorain filled the priſons in the Bois de Vincennes, with many heretical delinquents; among which, beſides one of the Soucelles, a family of rank in Anjou,

‡ Thuan. lib. xxiii. p. 469.

who

who with his brothers had cut his way through a party of the watch and the mob, who had beſet a houſe where he was entertained, there was a younger ſon of the Scottiſh earl of Arran. His eldeſt brother, who had been deſtined by the cardinal in the late reign, to be made an exemplary victim of the deſerts of the heretical party, had eſcaped into Scotland. The bailiff of St. Aignan, accuſed of giving ſeditious counſel to the king of Navar, and of writing licentiouſly againſt the adminiſtration, ſhared the ſame fate.

Satirical pieces are wrote againſt them, and the legality of their power queſtioned.

THE public agitation occaſioned by this rigid exerciſe of the ſupreme authority, firſt ſhowed itſelf by a number of ſatirical pieces which were wrote againſt the Guiſes. The effuſion of the preſs was a new political phenomenon, which at this time began to operate in the government of ſtates. The proteſtants had proved its advantage in aſſaulting the hierarchy. They were accuſtomed to wield the weapons of controverſy, and found it daily more eaſy to employ them againſt their enemies, both in church and ſtate. A formal treatiſe was publiſhed in the end of October, in which a variety of arguments were thrown together to expoſe and impeach the authority of the Guiſes, as a ſpecies of uſurpation §. In this performance, which, according to the ſtyle of the times, was fraught with proofs from the hiſtory of antient as well as modern kingdoms, it was ſhewn that the French monarchy, from its original, had always been ſupported upon wiſe and juſt principles of government, ſince the choice of one family to inherit the crown had not invalidated the liberty of the nation, to prefer abilities for government, to propinquity of blood in the royal line: That ever

October 30th.

§ Ibid. p. 470.

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ſince the lineal deſcent of the crown, as females were debarred from ſucceeding to it, they were alſo removed from the helm of government, which upon the event of a minority, devolved to the princes of the blood royal, aſſiſted and directed by the peers and nobles of the realm: That the pupillage of kings ought to be eſtimated in the ſame manner as that of other men, and their guardians elected, not by themſelves, but by the ſtates of the kingdom; eſpecially when they were not appointed by the will of the preceding monarch: And that the ſtatute of Charles V. reſpecting the king's majority, had not been authorized or complied with, in the caſe of his ſon and ſucceſſor Charles VI. It was particularly objected to the Guiſes, that they were not native Frenchmen, and by pretending to be ſprung from the blood of Charlemagne, they might be ſuſpected to aim at the crown; ſince, under the colour of this antiquated title, they were known to claim the principality of Anjou and Provence. Many examples were produced to prove that the adminiſtration of cardinals had been always hurtful to France; that, though they were employed by Francis I. he did not admit them to council, when the matter in queſtion related to the court of Rome; and that every wiſe ſtate ought to imitate the policy of the Venetians, who excluded all eccleſiaſtics from the management of civil and political affairs.

IN anſwer to this piece, John du Tillet, one of the clerks of the parliament, wrote a treatiſe upon the ſubject of the king's majority ‖. It was argued from the general tenor of the municipal laws, that nonage ceaſed at fifteen, and as private perſons at thoſe years, were qualified to chuſe their curators and managers, ſo

‖ Ibid. p. 472.

kings

kings were then privileged to appoint their chief miniſters and counſellors. It was ſhown from examples, at different periods of the monarchy, that the privilege of blood had often been diſregarded in the appointment of guardians and adminiſtrators of the kingdom, and that valid reaſons often occurred to juſtify a departure from this rule. The ſtatute of Charles V. was urged as concluſive in the argument, and the diſaffected party cenſured for pretending that the king was unqualified to determine what perſons ought to be employed in the management of public affairs; when it was known they had applied to the proteſtant princes in Germany, to ſollicit the king for holding a national council in France, and made no ſcruple of inſtigating foreign ſtates to interpoſe in matters eſſential to the honour and intereſt of the kingdom. Replies to this production were publiſhed in great abundance, which ſhowed that the principal argument drawn from the municipal law, did by no means found a rule or maxim, relative to the orderly ſucceſſion of the crown; and that the inſtances quoted from hiſtory in ſupport of that way of reaſoning, might be juſtly explained in a different light. Whatever degree of merit in point of ingenuity might belong to the performance, the ſharp and repeated attacks made upon it by different writers, ſcarce ſuffered it to undergo the public peruſal. The literary talents of the adverſe party did not alone decide its fate. Being conſidered to be wrote with a direct view to build up the preſent ſyſtem of the court, the uſual prejudices baffled its credit and reception. But in a ſubſequent period, at no great diſtance of time, when Charles IX. was in his nonage, the chancellor de l'Hoſpital adopted du Tillet's argumentation; and by means of his authority, and the high reputation he had for profound ſkill in the laws, got this con-

State of the queſtion with reſpect to the majority of the king.

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troverted opinion about the king's majority decided, according to the tenets of the court party.

As the princes of Bourbon, and their adherents, thus diſputed the point of Francis's majority, and challenged the authority of the queen mother and the Guiſes, as inconſiſtent with the antient forms of the kingdom, it will be neceſſary to explain the ground they had for controverſy. In very early times the Franks had no other law about the majority of their kings, but that preſcribed from its natural utility and advantage, to all the barbarous nations, among whom the ability to bear arms fixed the age of manhood*. It appears that the age of fifteen, for a conſiderable time, anſwered to this ſtandard; as the Franks originally wore light arms†. Cuſtom changed them in the age of Charle-magne, and by the variation, which augmented the weight of marſhal weapons and attire, the period of the royal majority was altered to twenty-one. It continued afterwards fixed to this computation in the caſe of fiefs and military tenures, as well as for that of the maturity of the ſucceſſor to the crown, until the reign of Charles the wiſe. To provide in ſome meaſure againſt the diſorders incident to a minority, which he had reaſon to fear would enſue at his death and overwhelm the kingdom; with the conſent of the princes of the blood, and other nobles of the realm, he framed and publiſhed, in Auguſt 1374, the famous ordinance‡, by which the eldeſt ſons of France, when they attained to the age of fourteen, were declared to have reached their majority, and to be capable of being anointed and crowned, and to receive the homage and oaths of fealty of their ſubjects. It was, ſome months after, ſolemnly

* L'Eſprit des Loix, liv. xviii. chap. 28. † Henault Abbrege Chron. p. 83.

‡ Boulainvilliers, let. xi.—D'Avila, liv. iii.

ratified

ratified and confirmed, as a conſtitutional ſtatute, by the parliament of Paris. But Charles VI. being little more than twelve years of age when his father died, the duke of Anjou his uncle ſeized the regency *. As the dukes of Burgundy and Bourbon contended this rank in the government with him, and the diſpute was likely to become violent, an aſſembly of the nobles met at Paris, in which, after great debates, it was agreed that the young king ſhould be preſently inaugurated, and according to the tenour of the late ſtatute, the ſovereign authority declared to be veſted in him, or as they explained it, that homage ſhould be done, and fealty ſworn to him, and all acts of government paſſed in his name, while the duke of Anjou was allowed to hold the rank, but not the name and actual office, of regent; and the other two dukes were appointed to the guardianſhip of his perſon. In this ſtate of tutory, Charles VI. continued till he was twenty-one †. The next and only minority, which happened after the framing of the famous ſtatute till the preſent reign, was that of Charles VIII. who ſucceeded to the crown at the age of thirteen years, and two months. His father Lewis XI. had appointed his daughter, the dame of Beaujeu, to be adminiſtrator to the young king, and favoured the adoption of the ſtatute in behalf of his ſon, by avoiding induſtriouſly to call her power a regency. This did not prevent a conteſt from ariſing about the government of the kingdom. The duke of Orleans, firſt prince of the blood, inſiſted that the natural weakneſs of Charles's conſtitution, together with his puerile age, inferred his minority; and that the appointment in favour of the dame of Beaujeu ought to be rejected. The diſpute could not be adjuſted without the interpoſition of the ſtates-gene-

* Henault, Abb. p. 231.

† Le Gendre, p. 42. Henault, p. 270.

ral.

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ral. Their determination was, that the king ſhould be reckoned to have attained his majority, and his ſiſter entruſted with the tuition of his perſon, while a counſel of ten peers and nobles, aſſiſted by the princes of the blood, was appointed to act in concert with her, and preſide in the adminiſtration. The dame of Beaujeu accordingly ruled the ſtate with all the power of a regent, for ſeveral years. Thoſe examples, better than all reſearches of political and civil law, ſhew upon what footing the queſtion about the king's majority ſtood, at the time of Francis's ſucceſſion to the crown. The ſtatute of Charles V. by which alone his majority was conſtituted, had been recognized and confirmed, but never actually accepted and carried into execution in the kingdom. As its authority was diminiſhed, or rather ſubverted, by a different courſe of procedure *, it muſt be allowed a matter of doubt, how far the princes of Bourbon, and their party, might in the caſe of Francis II. juſtly plead the relaxation of the law, and demand the nomination of adminiſtrators of the kingdom by the ſtates-general, or in that channel of public authority which had been uſually followed, when there happened ſuch a deficiency in years and underſtanding in the ſucceſſor to the throne.

From the condition of public affairs in France at this juncture, popular murmurs and complaints againſt the government were inevitable. The reduction of the army, the ſurrender now made of ſo many towns and places, in terms of the treaty of peace which was generally condemned, and the debts and burdens incurred by the royal treaſury, which could not be diſcharged, were motives to people of all ranks, to join in reproaching thoſe who had

Many officers of the army are diſcontented.

* Ibid. p. 225.

taken

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taken upon themſelves the difficult taſk of adminiſtration. The French officers and ſoldiers quitted the frontier garriſons in Italy and Flanders, with the utmoſt reluctance and deſpite. The generals who had acquired fame and preferment by thoſe conqueſts, thought their honour and intereſt affected by the loſs of them †. Many of the garriſon troops wanted ſeveral months pay, and had recourſe to refuſal of orders, and mutiny, when they could do no more to obtain ſatisfaction. Some towns, and ſmall ſtates of Italy, which had eſpouſed the French intereſt during the war, endeavoured to obſtruct the execution of the treaty of peace, which appeared to abandon them to the will of their enemies. The people of Sienna, from the peculiarity of their circumſtances, were thrown into the moſt violent conſternation. They had attached themſelves to the French, with the ardent paſſion which deſire of independency inſpires. Their obſtinate perſiſtance had proved offenſive to all the neighbouring ſtates. On the brink of deſpair, they ſtill reſolved to defend themſelves. The noble but impotent efforts of the ſpirit of liberty were ſeen in their deſtruction; which was completed by the Spaniards, who gave them up to their inveterate enemy Coſmo duke of Florence.

The confuſion and diſcontent conſequent to the diſbanding of a large body of troops, at the cloſe of a long war, became viſible and alarming to the court ‡. A great number of officers and people of rank from the provinces, who had ſerved in the army, crowded to Fountainbleau, offering petitions to the king for payment of their arrears, or ſome equivalent for their expences and loſſes

November.

They beſet Fontainbleau, and preſent petitions for their arrears.

† D'Aubigne, liv. ii. chap. 29.

‡ Thuan. lib. xxiii. p. 473. De Serres. Hiſtoire Gen.

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in ſeveral campaigns. This was not a particular incident, but the reſult of the military ſyſtem which prevailed in thoſe times. Though war was the chief glory of the prince, and the only profeſſion and employment of the nobility, it was not ſupported as at preſent, upon ſettled funds, or a regular calculation of expences to be ſupplied by accumulated taxes. Many of the nobility had military offices and commiſſions aſſigned them, which they executed upon their own charge. They were often ruined in this precarious trade, unleſs ſome requital by poſt or lucrative employment under the government was granted them. As ſuch eſtabliſhments were too limited to anſwer the numerous demands, and often otherwiſe beſtowed among the court favourites, the next expedient for indemnification, was to make temporary alienations of the king's revenues. Thoſe again being reduced to no certain or determinate valuation, were made a ſubject of depredation, both by thoſe who formed them, and by the people to whom they were aſſigned. Grants were multiplied, and continued without end, until neceſſity required a ſudden ſtop to be put to them, by an undiſtinguiſhing revocation. The many fictitious claims, and exorbitant grants in the late reign, rendered this remedy againſt the total diſſipation of the royal domains neceſſary; and the Guiſes had accordingly ventured to apply it, by getting a ſtatute of revocation paſſed in the uſual form. As ſome particular exceptions were always inſerted, and thoſe at the helm of government had it in their power to make other additions; the Guiſes were now accuſed of depriving the faithful ſervants of the crown of their merited rewards, on purpoſe to transfer them to the minions of their faction. Hence aroſe the throng and importunity of the ſollicitors at Fountainbleau, which ſtruck the cardinal of Lorain with the dread of a tumult, and made him order a gibbet to be exhibited, and menaces to be uſed,

as

as odious as the exerciſe of vengeance. The diſgraceful inſult exaſperated many of the veterans againſt the duke of Guiſe, whoſe military character had formerly engaged their eſteem and attachment.

THE precarious ſtate of Francis's health emboldened the ſeditious, and gave a paſſport to all the ſlander they could invent againſt the Guiſes *. The popular ſpite, and the virulence of party ſpirit, were ſtimulated by malicious reports about the diſtemper of his conſtitution. When, after the ſurceaſe of a quartan ague, and the appearance of ſome livid ſpots on his face, he was removed to Blois, for the benefit of a more healthful air; it was affirmed and believed, that he had the leproſy, and that the preſcription of the phyſicians was the moſt hideous one that could be deviſed, a bath of infants blood. This ignominious and wretched fiction ſerved to thicken the conflict of calumny betwixt the Guiſes and their adverſaries, who charged each other with being the propagators of it. The channel of invective being once opened, the rudeneſs and credulity of the times favoured the currency of all ſort of reproaches. The royal blood was ſaid to be vilified by the Guiſes, that the debaſement of it, in the opinion of the people, might pave the way to their deſigns upon the crown. The malevolence of the diſaffected was, on the other hand, repreſented to be ſuch, that they wiſhed equally to trample down the royal race, and to unhinge the adminiſtration.

The Guiſes, to check the tumults, uſe menaces.

To call the aſſembly of the States General, in order to remedy thoſe growing diſorders, or to form ſome regular ſcheme for moderating them, did not conſiſt with the eſtabliſhment of the Guiſe's

* D'Aubigne, liv. ii. chap. 16.

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authority. All that they attempted was, to ſupport themſelves by dint of boldneſs and reſolution, and to make uſe of the royal name and prerogative to intimidate and repreſs their opponents. They had marked out the heretical party as prime objects of the public vengeance; and they now attracted the general attention, by the trial and condemnation of Anne du Bourg*. When ſome commiſſioners of parliament were appointed by the late king to be his judges, he pleaded his privilege as a ſenator to anſwer to no capital accuſation before any court but that of all the chambers of parliament aſſembled together. By a ſpecial order from Henry, he was required, upon his allegiance, to ſubmit to the courſe of his trial; and having agreed to it, under proteſtation that it ſhould not injure his cauſe, he emitted ſuch confeſſions of his faith upon examination, as were held ſufficient to convict him of hereſy. From a final ſentence paſſed againſt him by the biſhop of Paris, he applied to the court of parliament; and having there met with no redreſs, he availed himſelf then of his deacon's orders, and inſiſted to be tried by his metropolitan biſhop of Sens; and after this litigation was diſcuſſed, to have judgment pronounced by the primate of Lions, who was the cardinal of Tournon. The ſentence of condemnation being confirmed by thoſe various tribunals, he was remitted back to the biſhop of Paris, to be degraded as an eccleſiaſtic, and delivered over to the civil power, in order to his puniſhment. From ſuch reiteration of appeals, and other ſtudied methods of defence, many were perſuaded, that du Bourg, from a dread of the fatal ſentence, ſtrove, to the utmoſt, to extricate himſelf from danger; or, as Mezerai expreſſes it, to ſteal his life by the ſubtleties of law. His character, which was adorned with many

And proceed to the condemnation of Anne du Bourg.

* Thuan. lib. xxii. p. 462. ibid. p. 473.

manly

manly and exemplary virtues, appeared hardly to be ſuſpected of this weakneſs; and his intrepid behaviour, when he expected and received his final condemnation, acquitted him from the cenſure. He was induced by the intreaty of his friends, who perſuaded him that the lives of many depended on the iſſue of his proceſs, to try every legal form of vindication. Having ſo far complied with nature and reaſon, he immediately relinquiſhed all hopes of life; and by a more explicit confeſſion of his religious principles, addreſt to the chamber of parliament, weakened the efficacy of ſeveral applications that were made to procure his remiſſion. When the fatal ſentence was pronounced, he ſhewed not the leaſt mark of diſcompoſure; but with entire tranquillity declared, that he forgave his judges who had decided according to their ſenſe of juſtice, though it was not agreeable to knowledge, and the wiſdom that came from above. He ended in a more vehement tone with theſe words; "It is high time now to extinguiſh your fires, and turn unto God by repentance, that your offences may be forgiven. Farewell all who ſit in the ſeat of judgment; I go to death without fear or reluctance." Being eſcorted to the place of execution in Gréve near St. John's ſtreet, by a large detachment of ſoldiers, he was ſtrangled, and his body thrown into the flames, in the midſt of a vaſt concourſe of people. He was nephew to Anthony du Bourg, high chancellor under Francis I. His family, his rank, and perſonal merit intereſted many in his fate, who had no biaſs to his opinions in religion. The proteſtant party were incited by his fortitude in death, and the commiſeration that followed it, not only to encounter danger with greater hardineſs, but to reſent and defy the relentleſs violence of their enemies, which neither reſpect to humanity, nor to particular perſons, availed to mitigate.

His execution exaſperates the Hugonots.

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UNSATISFIED with the flagrant teſtimony of their religious zeal in this proſecution, the Guiſes deſired likewiſe to chaſtize the audacious behaviour of other members of the court of parliament, who along with du Bourg had been taken into cuſtody. In this meaſure they gratified the reſentment of their principal friends in parliament, who wiſhed to impoſe ſilence on free debate, and over-rule the ſuffrages *. The delegates formerly appointed were ordered to form the trial of the ſeveral pannels. De la Port, who in the mercurial convention had endeavoured to confute the opinion of thoſe who were againſt remitting the rigour of the penal ſtatutes, was obliged to retract this cenſure of the judgment of the great chamber of parliament, and confeſs their deciſion to be conſonant to law, and worthy of being ever adopted. Paul de Foix was ordered to withdraw from his place in parliament for a year, and to declare directly before all the chambers aſſembled together, that the matter and form of the ſacrifice of the maſs were to be conceived as inſeparable from each other, and conſequently that the diſtinction he had made in the demerit of thoſe people, who held the catholic principles about the one, but deviated from it in the other, was unjuſtifiable. The caſe of Lewis du Faur was more eagerly conteſted, whilſt he exerted his utmoſt efforts to repel the attacks made upon him, and his adverſaries, from the ſtruggle, were provoked to higher indignation againſt him. His boldneſs and perſiſtance at length ſucceeded. The decree by which he was fined, and excluded for five years from the parliament, was reverſed, upon a remonſtrance that it had been obtained by undue influence upon the judges. This redreſs was procured from the great chamber, with extreme difficulty, in oppoſition to the intereſt, induſtry

Proſecutions are carried on againſt other members of the court of parliament.

* Thuan. ibid. p. 475.

and

and power of the preſidents St. Andre and Minard, and other votaries of bigotry and faction, whoſe endeavours to baniſh all freedom of judgment from the ſupreme court had been too effectually exerted. From du Faur's ſucceſs, the others under cenſure were encouraged to attempt their vindication. By favour, and ſome aſſiſtance from the few friends of liberty, the penal clauſes againſt de Foix were cancelled; and he, together with the reſt, permitted preſently to reſume their function and place. They were men of the moſt eminent character and abilities in the court of parliament, and ſhewed themſelves poſſeſſed of that honourable ſenſe of the dignity and privileges of that body, which ſtill diſtinguiſhes its worthieſt members. Some of them were, afterwards, employed in the moſt important affairs of the ſtate. Chriſtopher de Thou, father of the celebrated hiſtorian, whoſe ſentiments and character were ſimilar to theirs, intereſted himſelf warmly in ſupporting their cauſe. We may judge, however, of the general complexion of the counſellors of the parliament of Paris, or at leaſt of the occaſional influence of authority over them, from the diſcipline they at this time adminiſtered to the members of their body. We ſhall, after this, ſee that the combination now formed for arbitrary meaſures, with reſpect to religious queſtions, not only gained an intire aſcendant in that court, but that the impulſe of zeal communicated to it was maintained, when the government found it expedient to abate the ſeverity of the edicts about religion.

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WHILE the Guiſes, with ſuch efficacy, turned the wheels of government, they were not quite unconſcious of the danger to which they might be perſonally expoſed, from the turbulent ſpirit of the times, and the many maledictions pronounced againſt them. An ordinance had been publiſhed, prohibiting piſtols to be wore, Aug. 21.

and

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and long clokes, which might ſerve to conceal thoſe weapons fitted for ſudden aſſault. Though the regulation was aſcribed to the cardinal of Lorain's timidity, it appeared to be neceſſary *. When the proceſs againſt du Bourg depended before the court, Anthony Minard, one of the preſidents of parliament, who, with St. Andre, was a chief inſtigator of perſecutions, was aimed at and killed by a piſtol ſhot, as he walked under night from the palace to his houſe. Du Bourg had took the liberty that was allowed to pannels in capital trials, to make an objection to him as a judge in his cauſe; and touched with impatience and indignation at his refuſal to withdraw, he ſaid publicly, "that if his requeſt to him to retire did not prevail, he truſted in God he might be compelled to abſence, by ſome more mighty cauſe." Upon Minard's aſſaſſination, this ſpeech, which at the time it was uttered alarmed nobody, was recollected, and advanced as a certain proof that du Bourg had intelligence of the deſign againſt his life. It was not only made an argument for haſtening du Bourg's execution, but occaſioned the revival of a general ſcrutiny for perſons ſuſpected, on account of their religious principles. People of the proteſtant perſuaſion had the greateſt reaſon to tremble for the conſequence of ſuch inſtances of private revenge; and when any of their party were concerned in them, they proved its worſt traitors. A public alarm was quickly ſpread of ſecret plots and machinations carried on by them. The fearful eaſily believed the ſurmiſes of the malicious and the turbulent. The king's procurator, Burdin, took upon him to ſend advice to the court, without authority from the parliament, that the particular ſcheme of a conſpiracy had been detected and vouched before ſome of the chambers, by which a deſign appeared

The preſident Minard is ſhot, which occaſions a more general perſecution of the proteſtants.

December.

* Thuan. ibid. D'Aubigne, liv. ii. chap. 16.

to

to be formed, under the direction of Robert Stuart, a Scotſman, for ſetting fire at once to ſeveral quarters of the city, and ſeizing the opportunity of the confuſion to liberate all that were incarcerated for religion. An order was immediately iſſued from chamber by the king, requiring the parliament to proſecute with the utmoſt rigour all who were under ſuſpicion of apoſtaſy from the faith, and to uſe the greateſt diligence in finiſhing the trials of thoſe who were apprehended. To avoid the imputation of deficiency in zeal and duty, the parliament appointed four extraordinary tribunals, conſiſting of commiſſioners from their body, to meet and paſs ſentence upon all brought before them. They got and merited the name of burning Chambers. By the extreme celerity of their procedure, the condemning work was ſoon diſpatched. The priſons were delivered of their throng; who were ſent to baniſhment, led forth to death, and ſubjected to various kinds of puniſhment *. Robert Stuart having been apprehended, and to ſupply the want of proof againſt him, put to the torture, found that reſource in his native conſtancy of ſpirit, which in vain he implored from the young queen, who was too much accuſtomed to conform to the will of her uncles the Guiſes, to interpoſe for the releaſe of her Scottiſh ſubject. He bore the racking agony without any unworthy confeſſion being forced from him; and won a preſent abſolution from death, without obtaining a deliverance from confinement.

And the erection of the burning chambers.

When ſuch ſeverities were practiſed by the regular courts, the common rabble teſtified their frantic zeal by ſome ſingular extravagancies. In Paris, and many other places, they ranged images of the Virgin Mary, and other canonical ſaints, along the ſtreets

* Addit. aux Caſtelnau, liv. vii. p. 629.

and

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and croſs ways *. They dreſſed them with crowns of flowers, lighted wax candles, and gathering round them in rings, ſung the litany and other prayers. If any perſon chanced to paſs by, without ſtopping to offer a pious addreſs to thoſe unſeemly ſhrines, and join in the unſanctified vociferation, or if he withheld the expected gratuity for repairing their lights, he was proclaimed a Lutheran and heretic; and being inſulted, beat and dragged through the kennels, had a fortunate eſcape when carried alive to priſon. The ſenſible eccleſiaſtics ſaw, with uneaſineſs, this burleſque appearance of the catholic adoration of ſaints. They cauſed retire many of thoſe motley figures within the churches; but part of them ſtill maintained their ground, and received the incenſe and worſhipful acclamations of the multitude.

1560. January. Vacancy of the holy ſee.

After the deceaſe of Paul IV. the holy ſee had been vacant for four months; during which time the city of Rome was harraſſed with uproar and the cabals of party †. Before he expired, the people were in commotion, and began to uſe the licenſe cuſtomary at the pope's death, of opening all the priſons. It is upon thoſe occaſions that the modern Romans keep a holy-day to freedom in the antient ſeat of liberty, and ſeem to mimick the ſpirit of the citizens of the old Roman republic. The deceaſed pope's genius and character, his political views and predominant paſſions, are alluded to and ſcanned by the populace, who fail not to give very emphatic intimations of the praiſe or blame he hath merited. At this time they could ſet no bounds to their indignation. The ſtricter model of the inquiſition, which Paul IV. had formed at Rome, and which was his great object to tranſmit with thoſe

* D'Aubigne, ibid. † Thuan. ibid. p. 478. Matthieu, liv. iv. p. 211.

improve-

improvements to the chriſtian kingdoms of Europe, had inflamed the people with rage. They burnt the new priſon of the inquiſition, after diſmiſſing ſuch as were confined in it, and were on the point of ſetting fire to the convent of the Dominicans, whoſe inſtitution and brotherhood was the regular nurſery of the apoſtolic inquiſitors. They ran to the capital, broke into the palace, and having ſtruck off the head and right hand of a ſplendid marble ſtatue of the pope, they ſeized the mutilated trunk, and expoſed it for ſeveral days in a ſcornful manner through the ſtreets of the city, till ſome private hands threw it into the Tyber. By proclamation they decreed to deface the arms, and all the public memorials of the family of the Caraffi, which was punctually complied with. The pope's funeral was robbed of the uſual ſolemnities, and chiefly attended by the guards of the palace. To this eruption of popular reſentment, the intrigues of the conclave ſucceeded; which by the artifices of Vargas, the Spaniſh ambaſſador, and the ſchemes of the Caraffi, were prolonged to the end of this year: when John Anglo de Medicis, a Milaneze, was advanced to the papal chair, and took the name of Pius IV. Though the Caraffi had concurred with the election, upon the proſpect of his detaching himſelf from the Auſtrian intereſt, and copying the maxims of his predeceſſor, he only made a faint ſhew of it at firſt, and ſoon diſcovered the variation of his temper and diſpoſition. He repealed ſeveral of his acts of authority and diſcipline, and moderated the tribunal of the inquiſition, and made no difficulty about receiving the emperor Ferdinand's ambaſſadors, and confirming his election. The advances he afterwards made to effectuate a reconciliation with the queen of England, ſhewed that he acted in contraſt to the arrogancy and obſtinacy of Paul IV. As peace now took place among the powers of Europe, the requeſt for a general council was

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revived. It was not, however, till ſome time after, that this critical reſolution was formed by the pope. The ſolicitations of Ferdinand, and the propoſals in France for holding a national aſſembly of the clergy, at length puſhed him to a determination. But inſtead of a new council, for which the emperor and the princes of Germany inſiſted, he found it a more eligible ſcheme to reconveen that of Trent.

CHAP. III.

Diſpoſition of the proteſtants to reſent their ſufferings—Conſultations about the lawfulneſs of their taking arms—Meeting of the proteſtant conſpirators at Nantz—Diſcovery of the conſpiracy of Amboiſe—Its defeat with cruel ſlaughter of the captives—Accuſations of the prince of Conde—Judgment of the temper and conduct of the Guiſes and the Hugonots in the affair of the conſpiracy—De l'Hoſpital made chancellor—Power of the Guiſes alarming to the queen of England—Treaty of Edinburgh.

General diſpoſition of the proteſtants to reſent their ſufferings.

A VARIETY of circumſtances now concurred to ripen the ſeeds of diſcontent and diſcord, which were widely diffuſed among different ranks of people in France. The * court was conſidered by the friends and allies of the princes of Bourbon as a faction formed by intrigue, and upheld by the abuſe of the royal name and authority. The aſſembly of the ſtates was ſaid to be proſcribed under the unprecedented domination of the queen and the Guiſes. The court of parliament was known to be inſtigated to the exerciſe of inquiſitorial violence over the conſciences of men, whilſt the ſmalleſt hope that milder counſels might take place, was extinguiſhed by continual cruelties; the horror of which hardened ſome, and alarmed many others. The attempt to combat and ſuppreſs the prevalence of the proteſtant opinions, by the inhuman deſtruction of thoſe who profeſſed, or were ſuppoſed to favour them, had not only proved abortive, but the inceſſant repetition of this deſperate remedy, at a time when the government laboured under almoſt all the diſadvantages of a minority, became ſo impoli-

* De Serres.

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tical and dangerous a meaſure, that from it the very worſt conſequences might be expected. The converts, who had long continued as tame marks to unprovoked fury, were grown too numerous to bear ſuch endleſs oppreſſion, without the ſparks of reſentment kindling among them. The minds of people, hitherto ſtruck with a diſmal and gloomy aſtoniſhment, were now heated with rancour and indignation, when they beheld the moſt tyrannical cruelties inflicted by thoſe who had a very queſtionable title to ſupreme authority in the ſtate.

Though the retreat of the king of Navarre had damped the reſolution and diſconcerted the deſigns of his party, the ſpirit of it was kept alive, and fomented by the circulation of printed libels and defamatory pieces, of which the adminiſtration of the foreigners was the conſtant topic *. In theſe papers, which employed very able pens in France, beſides the groſſeſt pictures of the government, the nice point of the civil obedience due to kings, and the exceptions that ought to be made to the general principle, arguments which had been hitherto wrapt up in the jargon of the ſchools, were freely treated both in a moral and political light, and ſubjected to the judgment of all claſſes of readers. Such ſpeculations whetted diſaffection in the cities of the kingdom; while in the provinces, the defective and unfiniſhed conſtitution of the monarchy itſelf opened a wide door to the antient feudal liberty, and independance of the nobility. The war in the late reign had trained up many ſoldiers of fortune, who being fretted with diſappointment after the peace, and reduced to a ſtarving condition, ſwarmed through the country, and wiſhed to be employed at the expence of the public tranquillity.

* D'Aubigne, ibid. chap. 17.

Such

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The prince of Conde neglected by the court, becomes more attached to their cauſe.

Such powerful incitements to inteſtine broils would have tended with more rapidity to work their effect, if a proper leader of conſpiracy had appeared. The malecontents had loſt all hopes from the king of Navarre; but the character and ſituation of his brother the prince of Conde invited them to turn their eyes upon him. With merit equal to his rank, he was a ſufferer in his private circumſtances, by the partial procedure of the Guiſes, in conferring employments, who ſeemed to have gratified their antipathy to his family, by baulking and upbraiding his want of fortune. From a ſenſibility of the indignities he and his brother received from the court, and a perſuaſion that the Guiſes had intruded into power, in a manner inconſiſtent with the antient conſtitution of the kingdom, he is ſaid to have taken the general clamour againſt them, as the ſignal he wanted to conſpire their ruin*. According to D'Avila and Brantome, he got a numerous company of the friends of his family to meet at his caſtle of la Ferté in Champagne, and eaſily excited them, by his eloquence, to reſolve to take arms. Neither de Thou nor d'Aubigne mention this meeting; and the authors who relate the fact differ in the account of the perſons who were preſent. Subſequent hiſtorians have compoſed their narrative of the origin of the conſpiracy, and without alledging further authorities, or weighing their difference upon this particular, have adopted or rejected it according to their pleaſure. There is one circumſtance reſpecting the preſence and advice of the admiral Coligni at this meeting, which reſts intirely upon d'Avila's aſſeveration, and may be juſtly objected to and diſregarded. He makes Coligni, after applauding the reſolution of the aſſembly to employ force of arms, ſuggeſt the counſel to ground their oppoſition to

* Liv. i. Brantome de Conde.

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the court upon the pretext of religion, and to encounter and inſtigate the numerous party of the Calviniſts, puſhed as they were to deſperation and reſentment, to enter into the combination, and undertake the execution of the enterprize. It is quite inconſiſtent with Coligni's character, which had the ſtrongeſt tincture of magnanimity and honour, to ſuppoſe him inclined to throw the whole load and riſque of the conſpiracy upon a party, whoſe religious tenets he favoured, at a time when the train of it was differently deſigned, and he was not diſpoſed to engage in it further than by aſſent and connivance *. On the contrary, Brantome, who was acquainted with the admiral, and Caſtelneau, whoſe intelligence is more to be depended on than d'Avila's, aſſure us, that he was not made privy to the ſecret of the conſpiracy, on account of the opinion the firſt aſſociates in it had of his reſerve, and the terms he yet kept with the court. A perſon, who had not ſcrupled to mix with conſpirators, and regulate their deſigns, would have been more cautious than Coligni ſhewed himſelf at court in appearing to ſolicit for them. It is, indeed, evident, that the particular diſcovery of the principal projectors of the inſurrection could not be made, though ſome hiſtorians will venture their conjecture, or ſtretch their imagination, to aſſign the actors in the moſt ſecret ſcene, rather than not appear to unravel every difficulty.

The proteſtant divines are conſulted about the lawfulneſs of a conſpiracy againſt the Guiſes.

THE adverſaries of the court, and the party perſecuted for religion, became naturally united. The latter would be eaſily convinced by the former, that there remained no other expedient to effectuate their relief, than that of open force of arms. Their reſolution to brave the danger was not queſtioned; but it was not underſtood

* Brant. de Coligni. Caſtel. liv. i.

that

that the generality of them had reſtraints from that religion, for which they ſuffered, and doubted how far it was allowable, according to their principles, to take this violent courſe *. Thoſe who were always accuſed of eſpouſing religious tenets and doctrines, inconſiſtent with the ſovereign authority of princes, and tending to unhinge civil government, required to have the many obvious incitements they had to inſurrection juſtified by their teachers, upon principles agreeable to conſcience, and the common reaſon and ſentiments of mankind. Their ableſt divines and civilians in France and Germany were conſulted upon the queſtion, Whether it were lawful to take up arms againſt the duke of Guiſe and the cardinal of Lorain, and oblige them to give an account of their adminiſtration to the ſtates of the kingdom? The undertaking was pronounced by thoſe caſuiſts to be lawful, provided any one of the princes of the blood ſhould conſent to it, and the ſounder part of the community generally approved the enterprize. According to the ſyſtem of the hierarchy, which was held to be the only nurſery of monarchical government, a bull of excommunication from Rome, with a banner and crucifix tranſmitted, with the benediction of his holineſs to the nobles and leading men in any realm of Chriſtendom, was all the argument requiſite to inſtigate ſubjects to renounce their allegiance to their lawful rulers. Among the proteſtants an expoſition of reaſons and motives became neceſſary, which always implies ſome heſitation and ſuſpenſe, and hath not a poſitive tendency to inflame the ſpirits of men, unleſs the ſenſe of preſent ſuffering, and the apprehenſion of impending danger, give additional force to the reaſonings.

THE proteſtant caſuiſts certainly had learned that the deſigned inſurrection was favoured and encouraged by the prince of Conde,

* Matthieu, ibid. p. 219. De Serres.

though

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though he acted with ſecreſy and reſerve, and inclined to appear as an accomplice with the conſpirators. It was whiſpered among them that he was acquainted with their counſels, and would at the proper criſis declare himſelf their chieftain *, while the name and province of conductor of the enterprize were preſently aſſumed by another perſon. The natural ardor of his temper, which might have carried him to a more unguarded behaviour, was probably reſtrained by the perplexity and diſmay into which the friends of the Bourbon family were thrown by the puſillanimous conduct of the king of Navarre. As the moſt turbulent of them only became inſtigators of the combination, the prince of Conde choſe to look obliquely upon its progreſs, without venturing to guide the movements, or riſque his reputation on the ſucceſs of it.

La Renaudie is choſen to head the conſpiracy.

It was ſufficient, however, that the princes of the blood and their party were underſtood, by the bulk of the proteſtants, to be at enmity with the court. The rancour and animoſity the latter had contracted from their ſufferings, proved, like a train of combuſtible materials, eaſy to be inflamed by any one of a daring ſpirit †. John du Bari de la Renaudie was a perſon who had cultivated the moſt general acquaintance and favour with thoſe of the proteſtant perſuaſion, both through the provinces of the kingdom and in foreign places. His temper, manners and fortune, qualified him to move, with vigour and efficacy, the ſprings of faction. Deſcended of an antient family in Perigord, and poſſeſſed of ſome patrimonial eſtate, he had early embarked in a law-ſuit for the recovery of a part of it, conſiſting of eccleſiaſtical revenues, which he claimed in right of his uncle. After much time and

* Matth. ibid. † Thuan. lib. xxiv. p. 496. D'Aubigne, liv. ii. chap. 17.

expence

expence consumed in this tedious process, which was managed on the other side by du Tillet, one of the clerks of parliament, he had the mortification to be cast in court, with the unhappy stain of having emitted a false or contradictory testimony. Fined in a considerable sum, and sentenced to several years banishment, he quitted his country, with the pungent sensation of a man deeply affected with the loss of his character, and the wreck of his fortune. By the display of many remarkable talents with which he was naturally endowed, he sought, in the company of his countrymen in exile for their religion at Geneva and other places, to regain that esteem and reputation which at home he had unluckily forfeited. Ingenious, eloquent and enterprizing, he soon engaged their confidence; and, by making various circuits in disguise through different parts of France, he received and communicated the fullest intelligence *. Upon the first proposal for an insurrection, which some affirm to have been made at Lions, and others at Aubone in the county of Vaux; Renaudie offered his service, and undertook to advertise himself or by his friends, all such of the party as were already known to him, and others whose names were given in writing, and endeavour to procure their concurrence and approbation. A commission for that purpose was accordingly given him, and a council of six persons being named, with whom he should correspond; the first day of February was fixed upon for the leading men of the party to meet together at Nantz.

THE place and time of rendezvous agreed upon were well chosen, as the parliament of Rennes at that time transferred to Nantz, afforded the best opportunity of concealing their meeting, amidst

February 1. Its ringleaders meet together at Nantz.

* D'Aubigne, ibid. P. Daniel, tom: v. p. 662.

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the confluence of numbers of the nobleſſe and people of all ranks, whom law-ſuits or diverſion drew to the city upon that occaſion. In conſequence of the intimation given by la Renaudie and his emiſſaries, there came to Nantz near two hundred gentlemen, who belonged to families that ranked with the French nobility, and had intereſt and power in the ſeveral provinces where they reſided. Renaudie made it his buſineſs to find out their lodgings, to diſcover how the projected enterprize was reliſhed by them, and * then to get them all conveened into one place. He opened the interview with a ſpeech, in which, after extolling that ſpirited intrepidity they ſhewed, in daring to aſſemble from many diſtant quarters of the kingdom to hold the preſent conſultation, he endeavoured to trace out the origin and progreſs of the Guiſes power, in the moſt odious colours, by arraigning the merit of their ſervices, and magnifying the inſolencies and enormous acts of their adminiſtration. The perſecutions and tortures the guiltleſs ſuffered for conſcience ſake; the annihilation of the privileges of the princes of the royal blood; the diſdainful and barbarous menaces with which they repayed many of the king's beſt ſervants, were ſtrongly marked in the picture he gave. The ſcruple which might adhere to the minds of ſome from the notion of violence offered to the royal majeſty, he took pains to obviate, by ſhewing that the principles of true loyalty required this noble effort of their zeal to deliver the king from the power of thoſe inſidious guardians, who ſtudied to make a prey of him and the kingdom. The more to inforce the veracity of this ſentiment, he concluded with a ſolemn proteſtation, before God, in which he called upon them all to join with him, that in the whole aim and extent of his deſign, he would neither

* Thuan. ibid. p. 497.

think,

think, act, or utter any thing to the prejudice of the king, the queen mother, the king's brothers, or of any of the royal blood and family; but, with all his ability, would ſtrive to vindicate the majeſty and honour of the crown, and the laws and rights of the kingdom, from the abuſe and tyranny of ſtrangers. The whole company, like men who heard their own ſentiments clearly unfolded, ſtood up in teſtimony of their approbation *. Not one diſſenting voice leſſened their unanimity, nor aſked for deliberation in a matter apparently involved with difficulty and danger. To juſtify their deſign by yet more formal procedure, an atteſtation of their motives and reſolutions was drawn up in writing, and ratified with the ſigned opinions of the profeſſors of law and theology, with whom they had adviſed. The laſt motion related to the manner of executing their enterprize. With reſpect to this, it was agreed that a conſiderable body of men, without arms or ſhew of offence, ſhould be ſent forward on the way to Blois, with a petition to be delivered to the king, who was there with his houſehold, beſeeching his majeſty to reſtrain the violences done to the conſciences of men, and to grant the free exerciſe of religion: that in the mean time ſome choſen troops of horſemen ſhould be appointed to advance after them; and, upon a ſignal given by their friends, march up to them in the town. A demand was then to be made, to have the Guiſes diſmiſſed from court, and a proceſs of inquiry into their management to be carried on before the States General. If this was not complied with, they were to uſe their ſwords againſt the Guiſes and thoſe who offered to aſſiſt them; and, laſtly, expect the appearance of the prince of Conde to regulate their further operations.

* Thuan. ibid.

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The execution of their design fixed for the fifteenth of March.

HAVING formed this concert in the beginning of February, they determined to poſtpone the execution of it no longer than the fifteenth of March. The neceſſary levy of men, in that ſhort ſpace of time, was undertaken without difficulty; ſeparate charges being allotted to ſuch of them as were known to be qualified for them, either by rank or military reputation in the different provinces *. To the baron of Caſtleneau they committed the levy from Gaſcony; to captain Mazeres that of Bearn; to the elder Malliny that of Brice and Champaigne, and the Iſle of France; to Coccaville they gave the charge of Picardy; and to Mirabel that of Xaintonge and Poictou. Others of the nobleſſe amongſt them were directed to keep a watchful eye over the towns neareſt to Blois; leſt, on the rumour of an inſurrection, the citizens ſhould take the alarm and ſend aſſiſtance to the Guiſes. After this particular plan of the conſpiracy was laid, they departed from Nantz with expedition and privacy, all of them reſolved to perform their ſeveral engagements.

THE ſecrecy and confidence preſumed upon, where ſuch a number of people were admitted to be privy to the whole ſcheme of the conſpiracy, appears a great ſingularity, equalled by few ſimilar inſtances in hiſtory. It is true, that the weak and defenceleſs ſtate of the court would baniſh fear, and afford the ſtrongeſt hopes of ſucceſs: yet, upon any diſcovery, the Guiſes with little difficulty might diſappoint all their meaſures. This ſtrange riſque of the fidelity of ſo numerous a band of confidents had almoſt ſtood the critical trial, and ſurmounted every adverſe contingency. Whether the public hatred incurred by the Guiſes, or the apparent contempt they ſhewed of ſuch machinations againſt them, tended

* D'Avila, liv. i.

to

to give uncommon advantages to the conſpiracy; it is certain, that neither the ſenſe of allegiance to the king, as yet unperverted by examples of diſloyalty, nor the dangerous appearance of the attempt, nor the proſpect of being rewarded by the adminiſtration for a diſcovery ſo intereſting, proved ſufficient inducements for any of the confederates to ſhrink from their engagements, and betray the perillous deſign. General informations * of a plot againſt the government were ſent to the Guiſes from Germany, and other neighbouring ſtates; but in France, where the conſpirators were at work in raiſing men in ſeveral parts of the kingdom, all ſpecial intelligence failed, and in ſpite of the diligence of the *Muchards*, as the ſpies of the Guiſes were vulgarly called, from du Mouchy, the name of the inquiſitor of the faith, it ſeemed, at this conjuncture, that the loquacity and fickleneſs imputed to the French was a part of their character, which they could lay aſide. Through the inadvertency of its chief promoter, the conſpiracy, however, was at length diſcovered. La Renaudie, having gone to Paris to acquaint ſome of the party there of what had paſſed in the meeting at Nantz, choſe to lodge in the ſuburbs of St. Germain, at the houſe of Peter Des Avenelles, an advocate, a perſon of conſiderable character, who had imbibed the proteſtant opinions. From the uncommon reſort of people about his houſe, Des Avenelles began to ſuſpect that ſome ſecret intrigue was carried on under the management of his gueſt, and taking occaſion to give a diſtinct hint of his conjecture, Renaudie made no ſcruple to inform him of the project. At firſt Avenelles ſhewed little ſurprize, and appeared to applaud the deſign. After having time to ruminate upon it, a ſtrong terror ſeized his imagination. He was ſhocked with the criminal

* Memoir. de Caſtel. liv. i. chap. 8.

nature,

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Peter Des Avenelles, an advocate, diſcovers the plot.

nature, as much as with the danger of the enterprize; and thus overpowered and inſtigated by a double conſternation, he went and revealed all he knew of the plot to Allemand Vouzé, maſter of requeſts, and ſecretary to the cardinal of Lorain. The declaration he made ſcarcely met with credit; but as it correſponded with foreign intelligence, Vouzé directed the duke of Guiſe's amanuenſis to ſet out for Blois with the utmoſt diſpatch, and to carry Des Avenelles thither alongſt with him.

Upon which the court retires to Amboiſe.

THE court by this time had come to the reſolution of diſlodging from Blois; and, under apprehenſions about the unfavourable advices received by the Guiſes, had pitched upon Amboiſe as a place of greater ſafety, at ten leagues diſtance. The cardinal of Lorain was on the road thither, when Avenelles was brought before him, and made the alarming diſcovery. After hearing the whole of his intelligence, which was not very particular, the cardinal ordered him to be put under a guard, and conducted to Amboiſe. The whole courtiers were amazed and confounded; the deficiency of the information increaſing the impreſſions of terror. For ſome time they could not reſolve whether it was fit to require the advice or aſſiſtance of any, who, like the Colignis, appeared diſcontented, and might, perhaps, be ſecret abetters of the conſpiracy. The duke of Guiſe, whoſe preſence of mind remained unclouded with fear, ſhewed his acuteneſs in determining this point. In concert with his brother, he perſuaded the queen mother to invite the admiral Coligni and d'Andelot, by letters wrote in the moſt amicable ſtrain, to come to court, and help to adjuſt ſome important affairs of the ſtate, without ſignifying the preſent cauſe of their dread and perplexity. In conſequence of this well judged addreſs, the two Colignis, with their brother the cardinal of Chatillon,

Chatillon, preſented themſelves at Amboiſe. Their * ready compearance forms a preſumptive proof of their having no concern in the conſpiracy, though the contrary opinion, eſpecially with reſpect to d'Andelot, be maintained by ſeveral hiſtorians. The plain and unſuſpicious counſel given by the admiral, in a conference held with the queen mother, may be conſidered as a further evidence in his favour. He ſpoke with warmth and freedom againſt the ſanguinary meaſures hitherto purſued by the government in matters of religion, and aſſerted that the main incentive to diſaffection and revolt aroſe from that cauſe; and then declared, that in his opinion, to curb the progreſs of the preſent conſpiracy, they ought to publiſh a ſuſpenſion of the penal ſtatutes, and a temporary grant of liberty of conſcience, until the controverted articles of religion ſhould be examined and diſcuſſed by a lawful council. The chancellor, Francis Olivier, in his private opinion, an enemy to violence, immediately concurred with this propoſal; and having reaſoned upon it with the Guiſes, he obtained their conſent to it as a neceſſary and wiſe expedient. Accordingly, an edict to that purpoſe was prepared, and, after being at the inſtance of the king's attorney general entered into the records of parliament, was made public in the firſt week of March. At the ſame time a ſecret decree was framed to ſerve to explain and direct the execution of that which was ſent abroad.

And makes ſome preparation for defence.

The ſcene was now changed in a conſiderable reſpect to the diſadvantage of the conſpirators. The court, warned of the danger and preparing for defence, had retreated to the caſtle of Amboiſe, which by its ſituation on the river Lire, and thick woods encom-

* Addit. aux Caſtel. liv. i.

paſſing

Book I. 1560. paſſing the country, could be held out with a thin garriſon againſt a ſudden aſſault. Mandates and letters in the king's name were diſpatched to the officers in the provinces, and ſeveral of the nobility requiring them to aſſemble all the military force they could for immediate ſervice, and to arreſt all ſuch as they found in arms, whether horſemen or foot, on the road to Amboiſe. The king's body guard was changed, and a new troop of muſqueteers mounted on horſeback picked out for this duty, and the command of them given to Anthony du Pleſis Richlieu, a man intirely devoted to the Guiſes. Marcilli, lord of Cipiere, was ſent with a party as far as Orleans to procure intelligence, and obſerve the temper and diſpoſitions of the people in that quarter. He there met with the prince of Conde, who was upon his way to the court, and informed him of the diſcovery made about the inſurrection. The prince, as having a more preſſing call to appear at Amboiſe, proceeded with celerity on his journey.

With ſo much induſtry and reſolution had Renaudie and his aſſociates conducted their affairs, that the different levies of men were in readineſs, and ſeveral bodies of them advancing towards the neighbourhood of Blois. It was now known to many of them that their deſign was divulged, and the attention of the Guiſes bent to render it abortive. Renaudie was particularly adviſed of this unfortunate accident, but ſeemed not in the leaſt diſpirited or perplexed. As if it only ought to retard, but could not embarraſs the exe-

March 8. cution of the enterprize, upon the 8ht day of March, being arrived near Vendoſme, which was at no great diſtance from Amboiſe, he with all coolneſs and deliberation iſſued freſh orders to the chieftains of his party, who were marching forward to halt by the way, and adjourn the general rendezvous about Amboiſe till the ſixteenth

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of April. New inſtructions were alſo given about the order of their march, and the manner of entering the town, and aſſaulting the caſtle of Amboiſe. The interruption of the enterpriſe, for ſuch a ſpace of time, could not fail to produce various effects deſtructive to its ſucceſs. It may be reckoned the rock which ſplit the whole to pieces. The opportunity it gave to perfidy and tergiverſation, was one manifeſt diſadvantage. But though Renaudie ſeemed to judge of the ſteadineſs and fortitude of his followers by his own, he was not much deceived. By a wonderful effort of conſtancy and inflexible ſpirit, one perſon only was tempted to forſake his party, and ſeek the advancement of his fortune by treachery *. This was a captain named Lignieres, who ſlipt away privately to Amboiſe; and being introduced to the queen-mother, diſcovered the whole plan of the intended aſſault, by aſcertaining the number of men collected together, the names and quality of the commanders, the routs fixed for the different bodies, and the places where they lay concealed. This intelligence ſhewed the weak ſide of the conſpiracy, and enabled the Guiſes to level their main ſtrength againſt it.

The general rendezous of the conſpirators is adjourned, and further intelligence of their deſigns given to the court,

IT now appearing that the conſpirators, from the want of regular intelligence, eſpecially ſince the late countermand of their rendezvous, were thrown into a diſorderly and confuſed ſituation, and marched in ſcattered parties under night; the duke of Guiſe underſtood of what conſequence it was to ſeize this favourable occaſion of attacking them. Finding the military force at Amboiſe daily augmented by ſeveral companies of horſemen, who had armed themſelves with all ſpeed for the defence of the ſacred

and ſeveral of their parties are defeated.

* D'Avila, liv. i.—D'Aubigne, ibid.

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perſon of the king, he thought it beſt to employ them immediately to intercept the ſtraggling bands of the enemy. The paſſes through the woods and narrow ways, were ordered to be blocked up by ſome detachments. A large body was ſent to a place called Fredoniere, where the conſpirators, according to their firſt ſcheme of ſurpriſing the court at Blois, were to have aſſembled all their forces. Here D'Aubigne, and twenty more of his followers, were taken priſoners, the reſt of his party having taken flight upon hearing the plot was detected. Others who ſculked in the villages adjacent were likewiſe apprehended. Upon this ſucceſsful experiment of the weakneſs of the enemy *, the duke of Guiſe having walled up the back gate of the caſtle, and planted the king's archers and the Swiſs guards at the other, determined to riſque the defence of the place upon this ſmall body; while ſeveral detachments marched out to ſecure the great towns in the neighbourhood, traverſe the woods, and puſh the advanced poſts of the conſpirators. Immediately the count of Sancerre was ordered to Tours; the duke of Monpenſier to Angers; and the count of Rochefaulcaut to Bourges. Theſe and ſome others of the nobility, being leſs truſted by the Guiſes, were diſpatched away on this diſtant ſervice; while the duke of Nemours and the marſhal de St. Andre, were appointed to take poſt nearer Amboiſe, with the beſt part of the troops.

March 15th.

The intelligence was ſoon ſent to the court by the count de Sancerre, that a body of the inſurgents detached from the reſt, and commanded by Caſtlenau Challoſſe, and Mazeres, had lodged themſelves at Nozé, a place not far from Amboiſe, where there was a

* D'Avila, ibid.

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fort they could occupy, and convenience for quarters. The duke of Guiſe, ſenſible that neceſſity rather than choice made them preſent themſelves where they could be eaſily haraſſed, ſent the duke of Nemours to beat up their poſt, and try every ſtratagem to vanquiſh or diſperſe them. He reached Nozé with ſpeed, at the head of his corps, and guided by good fortune, came up in the critical moment to ſeize two of the leaders, Mazeres and Raunay, as they happened to walk unattended beyond the precincts of the village. Caſtelnau had ſcarce time, by retreating with his followers to the fortreſs, to avoid a like ſurprize, and to diſpatch a courier to inform Renaudie of this incident. The duke having formed a ſort of blockade about the place with his troops, carried his priſoners directly to Amboiſe. He ſtopt only a few hours, until he had muſtered up a detachment of ninety horſemen, who being all the ſervants and lacqueys of the king's houſehold, were fitter for parade than any martial exploit; and then returned to ſhut up the enemy. Preſenting himſelf before the ramparts, he deſired a conference with the baron of Caſtlenau, who obſerving the reinforcement of horſe which he had brought up, and beginning to dread the uncertainty of ſuch a timely relief from Renaudie, as his ſituation required, eaſily conſented to a parley with him. Upon this conceſſion the duke addreſſing himſelf to the whole party, aſked them, in the tone of friendly regret, why they came in that hoſtile faſhion, to obtrude their petitions upon the king, when they had free acceſs to preſent them like peaceable ſubjects? And whether it were not the more becoming, and ſafer courſe, to ſhun all further offence and contention, and ſeek redreſs from his majeſty in the manner moſt likely to conciliate his favour, without appearing to challenge it with arms in their hands; which reſolution, he aſſured them, they ſhould have no

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cauſe to repent, as he was ready to plight his honour for their ſecurity. After ſome general and indiſtinct propoſitions, it was at laſt agreed, that upon the faith and aſſurance given them by the duke of Nemours, who engaged for the ſafety of their perſons and their freedom, they ſhould follow him to the king †. Upon their being conducted to Amboiſe, Caſtlenau demanding acceſs to his majeſty, in conſequence of the compact made with Nemours, was treated with the utmoſt diſdain, and without heſitation, he and all his aſſociates were put in chains, and thrown into priſon. The parole he had given was declared by the duke, who exclaimed againſt this ſhameful violation of it. But the marſhals and knights of the order, who were preſent, pronounced that no ſuch ſurety

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could be given by Nemours; eſpecially when the king was ſo nigh the place. On which of the parties ought cenſure to fall? Upon him who promiſed where he could not perform? Or on thoſe who accepted and truſted the vain aſſurance? Or on them who made void a plain and direct engagement?

The duke of Guiſe commiſſioned to act as the king's lieutenant-general.

UPON the firſt alarm of the inſurrection, the duke of Guiſe had prevailed with the king's council, to authoriſe him to act as his majeſty's lieutenant-general, with ſupreme power in all cauſes civil and military, throughout the kingdom. Judging from this ſucceſsful blow given to the conſpiracy, that he could eaſily ſuppreſs the remains of it, he inſiſted now that his commiſſion ſhould be drawn out in full form; without which he could not warrantably proceed to do juſtice upon the rebels. When the patent, wrote by the ſecretary to the cabinet-council, was preſented to the chancellor Olivier, he refuſed to fix the ſeals to it. The importunity of the Guiſes being reſiſted by him *, at length

† Brantome de Montpezat.—Matthieu, liv. iv. p. 221. * D'Avila, ibid.

he was prevailed upon, by the arguments of the queen mother, who explained the views ſhe had of this extraordinary meaſure in a more ſatisfactory light. Amongſt other reaſons, ſhe alledged that the duke of Guiſe, by this exerciſe of unlimited power, at a time when the effuſion of blood was inevitable, would only incur a heavier load of public hatred, which otherwiſe muſt fall on the king and his other miniſters. The chancellor was further pacified with the grant of an edict, dated the ſame day with the duke's commiſſion, which pardoned all thoſe who from ſimplicity rather than any ſiniſter deſign, might be ſuppoſed to have taken up arms, upon condition they laid them down in the ſpace of twenty-four hours, and departed peaceably to their own homes; in which caſe they were even permitted to come and offer their petitions to the king.

THE courier diſpatched by Caſtelnau having delivered his meſſage; le Renaudie ſet out, and arrived by forced marches in the woody country about Amboiſe. Expecting to find it drained of ſoldiers, by the enterprize undertaken againſt Nozé, he determined to puſh on directly to the attack of that place. The error of dividing his troops, in order to conceal his march, which had proved ſo fatal to his aſſociates, expoſed him in this juncture, not only to manifeſt ruin, but being almoſt a ſingle mark to his ſuperior foes, to fall unſignalized by any atchievement, beyond that of perſonal bravery. As his approach was not unknown, the foreſt ways were beſet with the king's troops, who made havock every where amongſt the ſtrolling and bewildered parties of his men; or taking them priſoners in barbarous ſport, tyed them to the tails of their horſes, and carried them to Amboiſe *, where,

By the diſſipation of the parties of the conſpirators their defeat is eaſily effected, and la Renaudie himſelf ſlain.

* D'Avila, ibid.

without

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without ſentence of death, they were hanged in their military accoutrements, upon the caſtle-walls. The day after this ſlaughter, Renaudie appeared with ſome companies of his men, in a part of the foreſt where the baron of Pardillan, who was his couſin, had been ordered to range with two hundred horſemen, in ſearch of the diſperſed conſpirators. He immediately prepared for the encounter, and obſerving Pardillan to ſpur on his horſe with full career againſt him, he withſtood his ineffectual charge; and while his antagoniſt endeavoured to renew it, he thruſt his ſword through the vizor of his helmet, and laid Pardillan dead upon the ſpot. The page ſoon revenged his maſter's death, by wounding Renaudie mortally with a ſhot in his thigh. He ſurvived it not many moments; and his followers reſiſted faintly after his death. Moſt of them however died on the field. Renaudie's dead body being carried off in triumph, and ſuſpended on a gibbet that ſtood on the bridge of Amboiſe, with a libel inſcribed, Chief of the Rebels, ſerved for a ſpectacle to the gazing multitude.

THE immediate tryal and puniſhment of the chief conſpirators, was urged with the utmoſt vehemence by the Guiſes. Animated againſt them as their perſonal enemies, as well as the diſturbers of the government, they hoped to trace the diſcoveries of the ſame guilt to its ſource, among the princes of the blood, or their principal adherents. The chancellor Olivier endeavoured by various expoſtulations and arguments, to oppoſe this deſign of precipitate vengeance. He inſiſted that wiſe policy required the forbearance of ſeverities, until they could with greater certainty pronounce that the conſpiracy had exhauſted all its force, and left them undiſturbed arbiters of the fate of thoſe who had fallen into their hands.

hands. Whilſt he pleaded for the mitigation and delay of rigorous judgment, a ſudden and unexpected alarm of danger was ſpread. A body of the conſpirators had drawn together, and without oppoſition, approached the gates of Amboiſe. They were commanded by two chieftains, La Mothe and Coccaville; who, in the laſt extremity, had concerted this bold attempt to ſurprize the unguarded town. The confuſion and terror occaſioned by this effort of deſperation, ſhewed what the united force, and more intrepid procedure of the conſpirators, might have done. A party under Coccaville penetrated into the ſuburbs, and under favour of the night, marched to ſeize the bridge of Amboiſe; whilſt another body at the ſame time, attempted to force their way into the town, by a ſmall gate which opened on the bank of the river, and might have eaſily been beat down. Before they were ready for the aſſault, the break of day diſcovered them to the towns-men. The gates were ſecured, and the people ran confuſedly to arms. The aſſailants again retiring to the ſuburbs, the garriſon dared not to follow them thither, until the troops which ſcoured the country, returned. They were then attacked on all ſides, and being at length overpowered by numbers, almoſt the whole of them periſhed amidſt the flames of the ſuburbs. The chancellor's argument for lenity, being now no longer tenible; this new terror into which the court was thrown, not only haſtened the doom of the chief conſpirators, but furniſhed a ſufficient pretext for revoking the edict which favoured the eſcape of the common ſort, and for extending the ſcene of havock and deſtruction. Orders were inſtantly iſſued to ſpare none of the fugitives, but to put all of them to the ſword wherever they happened to be taken. The priſoners in the town were given up to the ſame unbridled

And cruelty exerciſed in the purſuit of the fugitives, and bloodſhed of the captives.

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unbridled carnage; various ways of ſecret execution being contrived, in order to hide the horror of ſo many deaths. Near twelve hundred were hanged, drowned, and a beheaded; ſlaughter ſo outrageous, that we may underſtand ſome hiſtorians *, who borrow the figurative ſtyle, almoſt in a literal ſenſe, when in the deſcription of it they ſay, that the ſtreets of Amboiſe ſwam with blood, the river was choaked with the carcaſſes of the dead, and the public places ſeemed planted with a foreſt of gibbets. The principal conſpirators were next led forth to torture and capital puniſhment.

Some of the leading conſpirators are tried and condemned.

When Renaudie was defeated, two of his domeſtics had been made priſoners, and one of them, named la Bigne, was forced by the rack, to decypher ſome papers wrote in a ſecret character, which were found about him. They contained a copy of that proteſtation and engagement, ſubſcribed in the meeting of the conſpirators at Nantz, together with the form of a petition which was to be preſented in behalf of the proteſtants, before the aſſembly of the ſtates. In both papers many expreſſions of fidelity and attachment to the king's perſon were inſerted. La Bigne being interrogated concerning the ſecret abettors of the plot, and particularly whether the king of Navarre, and the prince of Condé, had any concern in it, declared that he had only heard from others, that the prince of Condé would put himſelf at their head if the event of the enterprize proved favourable †. Raunay was then brought to the queſtion. After being acquainted with la Bigne's confeſſion, and a promiſe of life given him, on condition that his teſtimony was ingenuous and unreſerved; he was ſoon induced to confirm and ſub-

* Mezerai, Tom. vi. p. 38. † D'Aubigne, ibid.

ſcribe

ſcribe it. Being then aſked whether the king's life was not aimed at by the conſpirators, he was poſitive and reſolute in denying the alledgance, and the only additional confeſſion which the pangs of the torture wrung from him, was, that they intended to put to death the duke of Guiſe, and the cardinal of Lorain. Mazere, when brought forth and examined with him, adhered in each particular to the aſſeverations of his companion. The baron of Caſtlenau Chaloſe came next in courſe to his trial. From a ſcorn of the weakneſs of thoſe of his party, who were forced to confeſſions, and a conſciouſneſs of his own ſuperior fortitude, he thought it a piece of juſtice and duty incumbent on him, to invalidate the teſtimony of Mazere and Raunay, and prevent the uſe which might be made of them, either in the procedure againſt himſelf, or in the trial of others. With reſpect to the firſt, he inſiſted upon his being a delirious perſon, and produced divers inſtances of his acting like one deprived of his reaſon. As to Raunay, he declared that an old quarrel had made them mortal enemies, and therefore his aſſertions ought not to furniſh a ground of judgment in his cauſe. But the general character which Caſtlenau bore amongſt all parties, as a man of unſuſpected integrity, pleaded moreſtrongly in his favour than this unavailing defence, which ſeemed to be dictated by a ſudden indignation. The moſt ſtaunch courtiers could not avoid calling to mind the known merit and honourable actions of his former life; though they looked on him as ſeduced by the power of religious impreſſions. The duke of Aumale, brother to the Guiſes, and the duke of Longuaville, joined with the Colignis in an earneſt petition to the king to ſave his life *. Even on account of his elder brother, who ſacrificed himſelf by

* D'Aubigne, ibid. P. Daniel, tom. v. p. 668.

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warding off a blow aimed at the king's brother Charles duke of Orleans, when on the point of being maſſacred in a ſcuffle, he ſeemed juſtly to be entitled to the royal grace. But though the queen mother appeared to ſupport the interceſſion made for him, the king continued inexorable, through the perſuaſion of the Guiſes, who declared that the king's ſafety required the puniſhment of all conſpirators without diſtinction. When the ſentence condemning him to be beheaded for high treaſon was read, he ſeemed provoked with the charge, and diſavowed ſuch guilt with the unaffected tone and air of innocence, in the following words. "In ſpite of this judgment, I am not chargeable with treaſon, being conſcious of no treacherous deſign againſt the king, the queen, or any of the blood-royal, to whom the law of high treaſon extends. But when the taking up of arms againſt the Guiſes, the uſurpers of unlawful authority, is conſtructed treaſon, are not the laws themſelves confounded and inſulted by this interpretation? Soon ſhall others ſee and regret the groſs abuſes of our legal government. I count myſelf happy in preſent death, which comes to releaſe me from this painful thought, and intercept the ungrateful proſpect."

Others of the unhappy ſufferers, leſs capable of enduring their cruel deſtiny, gave vent to the moſt bitter expreſſions of heart-felt anguiſh and deſpair. From the unmerciful doom to which they were conſigned by their earthly judges, they appealed to the tribunal of heaven; and in this final refuge of woe, ſeemed to collect a full aſſurance of future vindictive juſtice awaiting their perſecutors. "Almighty God, (ſaid Villemont, lifting up his hands bathed in the blood of his ſlaughtered aſſociates) behold the innocent blood of thy people which ſhall not be left unrevenged

by thee!" And then bowed his neck to the ſtroke of the executioner. It ſeemed, in the midſt of thoſe ſcenes of death, that natural ſympathy ceaſed to affect the minds of all who had not ſome favourable impreſſions of the religion of the ſufferers. The young princes, attended by a train of the noblemen and ladies of the court, took their ſtation at the windows to behold the execution of the leading conſpirators; whilſt Ann D'Eſte, the duke of Guiſe's conſort, is ſaid to have been the only perſon who ſhed tears at the diſmal ſight, which flowed from ſome early notions of the new doctrines ſhe had acquired, as well as from tenderneſs and pity. We might be apt to pronounce this part of the narrative to be ſtrained beyond the truth, if the oppoſition to the ſentiments of humanity that ariſes from religious prejudices, was not well known to run to violent exceſs. This judgment may perhaps be paſſed on what is added in aggravation of the cruelty of the Guiſes, who are reported to have brought the king's brothers to view thoſe acts of butchery, in order to accuſtom them to the effuſion of the blood of the proteſtants.

The conduct of the Guiſes with reſpect to the prince of Condé.

FROM the time of the prince of Condé's arrival at Amboiſe, he had not only been eyed with ſuſpicion, but indirectly treated as a favourer of the inſurrection. To avoid at firſt an open diſcovery of the diffidence the Guiſes entertained of him, the guard of one of the caſtle gates was committed to him; but the grand prior, fifth brother to the duke of Guiſe, was joined with him in this poſt, and overmatched him in number of attendants. He was, ſoon after, commanded by the king not to quit the precincts of the court without leave; yet though thus become a priſoner at large, a ſeaſonable prudence enabled him to put the beſt face on the uſage he received, and to appear no way diſconcerted. Some

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pains had alſo been taken to turn the confeſſions of la Bigne and others into a formal accuſation againſt him. But as theſe amounted only to reports at ſecond hand, they could not be made the ground of a public charge, without ſome clearer evidence of his guilt. A circumſtance which alſo happened, was improved to augment theſe different aſperſions, and render him more the object of obloquy and impeachment *. The younger Maliny, ſuſpected of being in the ſecret of the conſpiracy, and afterwards reported to have formed a deſign againſt the duke of Guiſe's life, had privately eſcaped from Amboiſe. On enquiry it was found that he had been furniſhed for his flight with a fleet courſer, by the prince of Condé's groom. The cardinal of Lorain made a handle of this to gain credit to all the other articles of indictment againſt him. He endeavoured to convince the queen mother, that the factious ſpirit excited in the kingdom, appeared from many documents, to ſhelter itſelf under the prince of Condé's name, which was known to be generally borrowed by the diſaffected, as an authority for conſpiracy and rebellion; and that, as his conduct evidently encouraged this pretext for treaſon, it could not paſs unanimadverted upon, without expoſing the government to the worſt effects of civil diſcord. Catharine, among other reaſons ſhe had for diſliking the paſſionate counſels of the Guiſes, thought it in the preſent conjuncture, not only an imprudent, but dangerous meaſure, to provoke latent enmities, and inflame the public diſcontent, by ſubjecting a prince of the blood to a rigid trial, when many examples of ſeverity were ſtill glaring and recent. It being however alledged, that arms were concealed in his lodgings, ſhe directed a ſearch to be made, which, though executed with ſuch ſtrictneſs, that every door and cheſt

* Matthieu, ibid.

was

was thrown open, produced no diſcovery to his diſadvantage. After having proceeded great lengths in the moſt virulent attacks upon his reputation, and ſucceeded in exaſperating the king, and turning the ſurmiſes of the court, and the clamour of the vulgar againſt him, the Guiſes ſuddenly deſiſted from their accuſations of the prince of Condé. He was ſenſible of the ſcandal, and the indignities which were heaped upon him, and perceived that the contempt he hitherto thought ſufficient to oppoſe to them, was by no means an adequate vindication of his character.

HAVING choſe his time when the court was attended by the envoys of foreign ſtates, the prince of Condé demanded acceſs to the king's council, agreeable to his privilege as a prince of the blood. Upon his admiſſion, after delivering a ſpeech to confute the invectives againſt him †, he concluded with declaring, that ſince no verbal defence availed againſt the ſecret aſſaſſins of his reputation, he thought himſelf called upon to give the lye publickly, to every perſon of whatſoever rank he might be, under that of his ſacred majeſty and the royal family, who dared to aſſert that any conſpiracy againſt the honour and ſafety of the king and his houſehold, had been fomented by him; and to challenge his accuſer to ſtand the proof of arms in ſingle combat. Every one underſtood againſt whom this defiance was levelled; whilſt the duke of Guiſe riſing up, without the leaſt aſpect of diſcompoſure, immediately ſubjoined, that he was ſo fully convinced of the prince of Condé's innocence, and of the wrong done to him, that he would readily appear as his ſecond, if any accepted the challenge. This cool, and perhaps ſuperfluous reply, is to be regarded, not

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† D'Avila, liv. ii.

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ſo much as an evidence of the duke of Guiſe's diſingenuity, but rather as a proof that other meaſures had now been reſolved on in the cabinet council, for chaſtizing the princes of Bourbon, and the principal men of their party. By a behaviour accommodated to this deſign, the duke eluded an intended provocation which it was neceſſary to be diſſembled. As he acted his part before thoſe who truſted to effect their purpoſes by artifice, he was not aſhamed to make this ſubtle anſwer; and perhaps thought it a juſtifiable way of expreſſing his ſcorn and contempt of the arrogant challenge of his adverſary. From the authority of D'Avila it is plain, that ſuch a ſcheme of ſlower, but more effectual revenge, was by this time meditated by the queen mother and the Guiſes; which even the king, from the terror into which he was thrown, ſhewed an unuſual eagerneſs to promote. De Thou is not ſo explicit in pointing out this important fact, which ſerves to unravel the ſubſequent policy of the court, as well as the preſent ſhew of reconciliation, which the Guiſes affected with reſpect to the prince of Condé.

The proteſtant writers on the ſubject of the conſpiracy of Amboiſe much more numerous than the catholic ones.

SUCH is the detail of the moſt material facts relating to the memorable conſpiracy of Amboiſe. A great variety of memoirs on the ſubject of it were immediately compiled by the proteſtant party, whoſe haſty and inaccurate productions, dictated by recent indignation, obtained not that general credit and authority, to which otherwiſe they might have been entitled. Extravagant and incredible circumſtances were thrown in to aggravate the deſcription of a ſcene in itſelf ſufficiently cruel, and their writers, though abler and more numerous than thoſe of the catholicks, were believed to have adopted many falſehoods *. It is remarkable that the

* Langlet ſur le methode pur etudier Hiſtoire.

catholic

catholic authors have ſince complained of the deficiency of writers of their ſect, at the commencement of the civil wars, whilſt their opponents were provided with a ſuperfluity of them. At this period, they even allow that the authority of Poppliniere, who was a proteſtant, is the moſt unexceptionable one to which they can appeal. As de Thou has copied his narrative, we have followed it as the moſt authentic. From the hiſtory that has been given of the procedure of the government with reſpect to the proteſtants, and the firſt eruption of the civil broils by the conſpiracy of Amboiſe, the following judgment of the principles and temper of the two contending parties may be formed.

A judgment of the temper of the Hugonots and the Guiſes, in the affair of the conſpiracy.

IT appears that the proteſtant opinions were at firſt ſo imperceptibly diffuſed as to create no conſiderable agitation, or dangerous alarm in the ſtate. Without any calm or rational judgment with reſpect to their tendency, they were, indeed, generally abhorred and condemned. Thoſe who embraced them were the objects of public hatred, and looked upon as fewel prepared for the fire of preſent and everlaſting deſtruction: but for a courſe of years they were too contemptible to be dreaded as formidable to the monarchy. When Francis I. delivered ſeveral of them over to the ſtake and the flames, they could only, by an arbitrary and capricious conſtruction, be regarded as enemies of the civil authority. Though ſurprizingly multiplified in the reign of his ſucceſſor, they were not chargeable with inſulting the eſtabliſhed religion, or with any turbulent or factious attempt. No abuſes, like what happened in the Netherlands, ſuch as the overthrowing of altars and images, or the ravage of churches, could be alledged againſt them; and previous to the period we have conſidered, not a ſingle inſtance of ſuch licentious zeal is produced by the popiſh writers of credit. Notwithſtanding

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ſtanding Maimbourg's frothy declamations and invectives, it is certain that, as the weaker party, they were ſtill overawed, and conſtantly expoſed to injurious accuſations, and the moſt cruel ſeverities. The perſecution of the firſt proteſtants in France may therefore be pronounced a piece of deteſtable and ignominious barbarity. According to our preſent ideas, it cannot appear to us in any other light. But we ought, perhaps, in a fair eſtimate, to moderate this judgment in ſome degree, and for the ſake of humanity itſelf, recollect the inveterate prejudices and narrow principles of thoſe times, in which the moſt intelligent men ſcarce preſumed to exerciſe the natural privilege of reaſon in matters of religion; and when a ſuperſtitious dread and horror of all innovations of this kind not only reſtrained them from having the leaſt notion of toleration, but rendered any ſuch claims of conſcience a damnable ſin. Beſides a total want of liberality of ſentiments ſufficient to combat the moſt vulgar prepoſſeſſions, thoſe of the firſt rank in the kingdom, who conſidered the influence of the new religious tenets in a political view, would believe them dangerous to the eſtabliſhed government: for though the example of toleration had been ſet in Germany by Charles V. yet its firſt appearance was ſuch, that it might be judged to have embroiled and diſtracted the empire. We muſt therefore condemn and pity the wretched ſtate of the human mind, when men, in order to expreſs their blind reverence for what they reckoned the true religion, thought it their duty and their honour to ſhake off all equitable and generous principles of action.

THE inflexible fortitude of the proteſtant converts in France, which was confirmed by the increaſe of their numbers, and the political ſituation of the kingdom produced the conſpiracy we have

related. It is not ſufficient to ſay, that they were inſtigated by the princes of the blood to attack the illegal authority of the Guiſes. They had the moſt cogent reaſons to believe their government the hardeſt tyranny, and would be the more readily convinced of its being an illegal and violent uſurpation. But they aimed at ſomething more than a change of the adminiſtrators of the kingdom, and took arms to procure a releaſe from their ſufferings, and to obtain ſome meaſure of toleration. This was, undoubtedly, their principal view and inducement; and it has been obſerved, to their credit, that they ſhewed ſome reſerve, and agreed to proceed under certain reſtrictions to the execution of their reſolute deſign. Tho' the proteſtants appeared as conſpirators againſt the government, and attempted to render themſelves maſters of the court, this behaviour aroſe from no project of ambition, nor from unwarrantable principles of diſaffection to the king or monarchy, but from a motive more powerful than any of theſe, the irreſiſtible deſire of extricating themſelves from the perſecution of the rack and the gibbet. It is evident that for ſome time they aſpired to no higher favour than that of being exempted, by a ſimple toleration, from the penal laws. The very ſolicitation of this had been accounted a crime. The appearance made by a few counſellors of parliament on the ſide of clemency had incenſed and armed the court with double vengeance; and the avowed purpoſe to oppreſs and extirpate the proteſtants was, by the ruling party in the preſent reign, adhered to and adopted, not only as an indiſpenſible maxim of government, but as altogether neceſſary and eſſential to the ſupport of their ſyſtem of authority. The general odium incurred by the Guiſes, and the title of the princes of Bourbon to challenge the legality of their adminiſtration, ſeemed to clothe the attempt, which they thought juſtifiable from ſelf-preſervation, with the appearance

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of patriotiſm and public virtue, and to invite them to employ force againſt the invaders of their natural and political privileges. Thus provoked and agitated, as the French proteſtants were at this period, they cannot, with propriety or juſtice, be judged profeſſed adverſaries to civil government, and partizans to diſloyalty; becauſe, being abandoned to deſperate counſels, they embarked in the conſpiracy of Amboiſe, and attempted what mankind, when placed in ſimilar circumſtances, have done in almoſt every age and nation of the world. We regret that violent meaſures ſhould have been the ſole expedient for obtaining that inoffenſive liberty which conſcience demands, and which has become the glory and the happineſs of many civilized nations in Europe, after ſpiritual tyranny, ſupported by bigotry and zeal, had ſtretched its dark dominion over them for a long courſe of time.

A LATE writer * remarks it as a proof of the formidable authority and influence to which the Guiſes had at that time attained, that neither the princes of Bourbon, nor the Colignis, dared to appear openly to eſpouſe the party of the conſpirators, which they ſecretly favoured. Taken in a political view, the conſpiracy rather diſplays the weak ſtate of the monarchy, and the injudicious and blameable conduct of thoſe who had the chief management of affairs, as well as the hazardous and raſh procedure of the partizans, who engaged in it. In the hands of Francis II. the monarchical power itſelf was diminiſhed, and by no means guarded againſt the defections of the nobility, and ſudden inſurrections. In the reigns of abler princes, the reverence of the nobles for the dignity and honour of their king, and their general attachment to his ſervice, conſtituted all the real ſtrength of the royalty. The few hired troops, or ſtand-

* Voltaire Hiſt. d'Europe.

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ing regiments, in the pay of the government were diſperſed in the frontier garriſons, while the military force retained about the court, conſiſting of a band of three hundred archers, was too inconſiderable to oppoſe any unexpected violence. The authority of the Guiſes was haſtily uſurped; and though by a piece of bold and ſpirited management rendered maſters of the court, they were not equally ſucceſsful in guiding the helm of government; and inſtead of underſtanding the art of conciliating the public favour, they appear to have diſdained and forfeited the popular eſteem. Hence their party proved too feeble a prop to ſupport the royalty, when in its decline by the pupillage of Francis, as the ſanction of his name for the eſtabliſhment of their authority became inſufficient to check the growth of diſcontent and faction. In this ſituation of the government, to puſh the perſecutions for religion with greater violence, and inflame the reſentment of a party, who were ſtill multiplying in the midſt of their oppreſſions, was, ſurely, a palpable abſurdity. Hence, though the princes of Bourbon did not openly patronize the conſpiracy, inferior agents, without this advantage, found it no very difficult or dangerous taſk to undertake the enterprize. But in various inſtances the Guiſes ſhewed, that they thought the placing themſelves in the ſeat of power was the ſame thing, as being eſtabliſhed in it; and that they were not ſcrupulous of ſtretching their authority, when true policy required them rather to conceal than make unſeaſonable oſtentations of it. A glaring proof of their immoderate paſſion for aggrandizing themſelves is obſervable in the duke of Guiſe's procuring the commiſſion of lieutenant-general, which was the only ſtep he wanted to authorize his exerciſe of ſupreme power in the kingdom. Even in the moſt favourable judgment, it cannot be reckoned that he ſought this promotion for the ſake of averting the odium that

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might fall on the king, from the puniſhment of the conſpirators. If we think it culpable in thoſe who were inſtigated by their diſtreſſes to form a clandeſtine deſign to ſurprize the court, and get a tender and infirm prince into their power; we cannot acquit the Guiſes from blame, who, whilſt they acted as guardians of the king and the royal dignity, made a handle of a ſudden danger to which they were expoſed, to leſſen the eſtimation and affront the honour of both, by aſſuming a ſpecies of authority which vilified Francis and degraded the ſovereignty. In this reſpect it may be accounted an enormity inauſpicious to the monarchy, which, by ſoothing the pride and ambition of the Guiſes, taught them, ever after, to graſp at the firſt place in the government. The attempt of the conſpirators, though quaſhed and ſeverely puniſhed, by infringing the ties of loyalty, proved the unhappy ſignal of future diſaffection, while profuſion of blood, which was ſhed at Amboiſe, fermented the growing diſorders of the ſtate, until the hatred and reſentment of the oppoſite parties againſt each other, being excited to a height, broke out into a violent flame of civil diſcord and hoſtility.

Different etymologies of the name of Hugonot.

THE name of proteſtants, which the Lutherans in Germany took, from the proteſtation they made againſt the decree of the diet of Spires, 1529, became general among the diſſenters from the church of Rome. It was aſſumed by thoſe of France, until about the time of the conſpiracy, they got the appellation of Hugonots, of which various derivations are given. As they ſoon became very numerous in Tours, it is alledged by Popliniere, that they began to be pointed out and known by that name from *Huguon*, one of the gates of that city, near which they were obſerved to hold their private aſſemblies. The viſcount of Tavannes, in the life of his father the marſhal, deduces it from the Swiſs or German

word *eid-genoſſen*; the firſt ſignifying *faith*, and the other, *confederated by oath*. He affirms, that the proteſtant miniſters brought this foreign title into France, and applied what was a watch-word among the Swiſs, when they roſe againſt the houſe of Auſtria, to the followers of their ſect. It is difficult to determine which of thoſe different explications ought to be preferred; and though one of their oldeſt writers, pretending to boaſt of this name, ſays, that they might well be called Hugonots, becauſe they defended the poſterity of Hugues Capet againſt the Lorainers or Guiſes, who were ſprung from Charle Magne; it is moſt probable that this deſignation was ironically beſtowed on them by the catholics. For comprehending the general character of the chief Hugonots engaged in the conſpiracy, little more is neceſſary to be added. Renaudie is repreſented as a perſon of remarkable abilities, but diſſolute in his principles and conduct. De Thou * alledges that the judicial prevarication for which he was condemned, did not clearly fix the criminal purpoſe on him. Appearing under this infamous reproach, at the head of a violent enterprize, he could not avoid the uſual fate of the audacious and unfortunate, to have his faults, rather than his qualifications, remembered in hiſtory. That he engaged with ſuch zeal in the cauſe, much more from ſelfiſh and reſentful motives, than from thoſe of a public and religious nature, need not be called in queſtion. Several of the chieftains that followed him, we may believe, were as much ſwayed by their private intereſts as their principle of conſcience, and were diſpoſed to become adventurers in the new projected ſcheme of the adminiſtration. But this judgment ought not to be formed of the generality of them, and is by no means applicable to the common claſs

* Thuan. lib. xxiv. p. 496.

of

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of proteſtants, many of whom, it was known, were drawn together without arms, and with no other deſign but to preſent their petitions to the king. Des Avanelles, whoſe diſcovery of the conſpiracy had expoſed the lives and fortunes of that party, whoſe religious opinions he followed, to manifeſt perdition; with ſenſibility ſufficient to create compunctions for the bloody ſcene, which might be imputed to him, and a degree of principle to excuſe his conduct, and combat his reflections on its conſequences, found it a neceſſary alleviation to his perplexity, and a relief to his apprehenſions of hatred and danger, to retire out of France into the dutchy of Lorain. By the duke of Guiſe's recommendation, he was there provided of a creditable employment, in one of the inferior courts of law. By continuing in the ſame religious ſentiments, and ſupporting his former favourable character, he rendered that entirely credible with reſpect to him, which is almoſt never believed of any who act the part he did; that his principle, allowing of no plots or combinations againſt a ſettled government, was his main, if not his ſole inducement, to betray the ſecrets of his friends and his party.

Singular character of des Avanelles.

THE violent ſhock given to the peace of France was deeply regreted, and not long ſurvived, by the high chancellor Francis Olivier, whoſe counſels in the adminiſtration of political affairs, as well as in his juridical capacity, were matured by wiſdom, and tempered with mildneſs. In the decline of his life, which required * the favour of a calm and peaceable ſcene of action, having felt the ſenſible inconvenience and diſquiet of being placed amidſt the late diſorders of the ſtate, and the animoſities of faction, which he in vain eſſayed to moderate; he found that impreſſion of con-

The death of the high chancellor Olivier.

* Matthieu, liv. iv.

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cern and grief grew upon his ſpirits, which was natural to a perſon of his humane diſpoſition, and ſoon began to ſink under it. Soon after he was inveſted with his office, it was perceptible to him that he was re-admitted to a place in the adminiſtration *, to be made ſubſervient to the ambitious projects of thoſe who ruled; a ſituation altogether grievous and unſupportable to him, whoſe former expulſion from court was juſtly attributed to his conformity to the dictates of honour and probity. The Guiſes deſigned to have the vacancy of his place ſupplied by John Morvilliers, biſhop of Orleans, a man not unequal to the dignity of it. The queen mother, who by this time began to take ſome ſeparate counſels with her confident the dutcheſs of Monpenſier, in order to preſerve her own authority againſt the incroachments of the Guiſes, had ſolicited the king in favour of Michael de l'Hoſpital. He had already recommended himſelf at court, by his addreſs, his capacity for buſineſs, and even by his literary talents, and was looked upon as one ſingularly qualified for the management of critical affairs. His behaviour in general was ſuch as rendered him not ungracious to the Guiſes; who, finding the king diſpoſed to promote him to the chancellor's office, appeared not to diſapprove the choice he made; but believed that the conſent they gave to it would be conſtructed by de l'Hoſpital an obligation ſufficient to engage him to their intereſt. He underſtood, however, that he owed his advancement to the queen mother, and attached himſelf chiefly to her ſervice †. D'Aubigne is ſingular in affirming that he was acceſſary to the conſpiracy of Amboiſe, and had ſubſcribed his name at large to an original ſcroll of it, which he had ſeen among his father's repoſitories, and ſhewn to ſeveral people of rank. If this be ſuppoſed

Who is ſucceeded by the famous de l'Hoſpital.

* Thuan. lib. xxiii. p. 465. Ibid. lib. xxiv. p. 506.

† Hiſt. Univ. liv. ii. chap. 18.

true,

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true, which is hardly credible, it may be ſaid, that one of the beſt ſubjects and citizens became an occaſional conſpirator. In that place of government, which was moſt difficult to be occupied without perfidy to the public, and becoming the tool of power, he happily proved the † ſhield of the ſtate, and oppoſed, often ſucceſsfully, the vigour of his virtue and abilities againſt the violence of the Guiſes, and the inſidious ſchemes of queen Catharine. He could not, however, divert their ambitious deſigns, without ſeeming to co-operate with them. He had ſkill and reputation ſufficient to enable him to perform, for a conſiderable time, this delicate taſk; but, like his predeceſſor, at laſt he found that, in factious times, the character of moderation and integrity is only to be maintained in a private ſtation.

THE king of Navarre, diſengaged as he ſeemed to be, by his retirement from the factious conteſts that diſturbed the court, did not remain altogether undiſquieted. He not only found himſelf made the dupe of the queen mother's intrigues, and of his own credulity, but knew too well the treatment his brother had received from the Guiſes, and the ſuſpicions they endeavoured to propagate with reſpect to himſelf and his friends, to leave him ground to imagine, that he ſtood in terms of concord with thoſe who had loaded him with affronts. Their late triumph over the conſpiracy, he knew, would fluſh their pride, and diſpoſe and enable them to rule the kingdom with more arbitrary ſway. Such alſo were the ſentiments of the conſtable Montmorency, of the Colignis, and his other adherents; who, from the late extenſion of the duke of Guiſe's authority in the ſtate, would conclude that nothing was favourably intended with reſpect to themſelves, or their party.

† Thuan. ibid.

THE

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The power of the Guiſes alarms the queen of England.

THE confirmation of the power of the Guiſes, and the tenour of their government in France, beſides throwing that kingdom into diſorder, proved alſo very intereſting to other nations. Their political principles and attachments were ſo well known, that neighbouring powers could eaſily gueſs whether they might expect their alliance and friendſhip. Of all others the queen of England had the greateſt reaſon to obſerve their conduct, and prevent their enterprizes in Scotland. Her own ſafety appeared to be ſo immediately concerned in the fate of thoſe who promoted the religious reformation in that part of Britain, that ſhe made no ſcruple to enter into a treaty with them, for the expulſion of foreign troops out of the iſland, and for the mutual defence of the two contiguous kingdoms, againſt all ſuch invaſions. In vindication of this conduct, which might be conſtructed an infraction of the general peace, and an unwarrantable encouragement of revolt againſt the authority of ſovereigns, ſhe publiſhed a declaration of her motives at London; copies of which ſhe took care to have alſo diſperſed in France. The argument and ſtrain of this manifeſto reſembled the public accuſations with which the Guiſes were charged in that kingdom *. From them it was alledged, and not from the will of the king and queen, that the diſturbances in Scotland were derived and augmented; that their endeavours to model the counſels of France to their ambitious ſyſtem had ſcarce been controuled in the late reign, but that now they were puſhed on in a career that defied all reſtraint; that the arms of England borne by Francis and Mary, who, from inexperience, ſubmitted to their dictates; and the hoſtilities commenced by their direction in Scotland, were ſuch proofs of their intention to ſhake the tranquillity

* Thuan. p. 493. P. Daniel, tom. v. p. 695.

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of Britain, that ſhe was determined to employ her utmoſt ability to extinguiſh the riſing flame of war, before it ſpread into her dominions; while yet it was much more her deſire to preſerve the peace inviolated, and behold all grounds of diſcord terminated by the recal of the French forces out of Scotland. This querulous and vehement declaration from Elizabeth, which appeared not many days after the conſpiracy of Amboiſe, ſtruck the court and the Guiſes with ſurprize. De Seure, a knight of the religious order of St. John, was ſent over to England, to juſtify the conduct of the French court; and, after explaining the motives for employing, at that time, ſuch a military force in Scotland, in the moſt plauſible way, to give Elizabeth aſſurance that, on condition, ſhe deſiſted from ſupporting thoſe who oppoſed the royal authority in that kingdom, the number of troops ſhould be ſo reduced, that not the ſmalleſt pretence for apprehenſion or complaint ſhould be left her on that head. But negotiation proved inſignificant, and the laſt anſwer from Elizabeth was, that her forces had already inveſted the town and port of Leith.

In Scotland the town of Leith is inveſted by her forces; and ſome time after the treaty of Edinburgh is made.

FOR a conſiderable time the French defended the town with the greateſt ſkill and bravery. They maintained their ground, however, under diſadvantages which could not be long ſupported. Elizabeth knew her ſuperiority, and had appointed her ſecretary, Cecil, to repair to Scotland, and manage the treaty with the French envoys, Monlue, biſhop of Valence, and Charles of Rochefoucault, lord of Rendan. To ſave the honour of Francis and Mary, the Scots were not allowed to treat with them as parties, but all that they wanted was granted to the queen of England. An oblivion of whatever had been done during the conteſt, the diſmiſſion of the French troops from Scotland, and an engagement, that queen Mary

ſhould

ſhould not for the future wear the arms of England, were conceſſions in the treaty of Edinburgh, on the part of France, which ſhewed the diſhonourable conſequences of the precipitant reſolutions taken about the affairs of Scotland. The Guiſes were provoked at the many ſevere and juſt reflexions which were thrown out againſt their management. They vented part of their indignation upon Sir James Sandilands, who was ſent into France with the petition of the Scottiſh lords of the congregation. As he was a knight of Malta, and, by the ties of that order, a liſted champion of the apoſtolic church, they upbraided him with having apoſtatized from it, by bearing a commiſſion from heretics in a catholic kingdom. An adherence to the moſt rigid principles of the church of Rome being one chief requiſite of their political ſyſtem, they could not, it ſeems, behold without diſpleaſure an inſtance of the deſertion of them, even in a perſon who came in a public character from a foreign nation where the proteſtant religion was eſtabliſhed. But as their aim to enthral Scotland by the chains of ſuperſtition and ſpiritual tyranny proved altogether unſucceſsful, ſo their arbitrary and violent efforts to curb religious liberty, and fetter the conſciences of men in France, were followed with many pernicious conſequences in that kingdom; by which its hiſtory, in one continued period, becomes a more animated ſubject of review, than that of any other modern nation during the ſame compaſs of time.

THE

HISTORY of FRANCE.

Reign of FRANCIS II.

BOOK II.

CHAPTER I.

Reſolution of the court to call an aſſembly of the Notables—*Affectation of lenity by the court—Edict of Romorantin—Aſſembly of Fountainbleau—Reſolution to call a meeting of the States General—La Sague's arreſtment, and diſcovery of the ſecrets of the princes of Bourbon.*

Year 1560. IT is a truth, which appears authenticated from hiſtory, that mankind have attained to a very ſuprizing refinement in intrigue and artificial management of particular events in government, even whilſt they remained entirely ignorant of the general principles of ſound policy, and thoſe who ſat at the helm of ſtate affairs were neither capable of diſcovering or adopting its plaineſt maxims. In this and other enſuing periods of the French hiſtory, we may obſerve

obſerve various appearances of that ſpecies of political knowledge which conſiſts in ſtratagem and ſubtlety of conduct. In this reſpect queen Catharine diſcovered all the genius natural to her country; which, after being the celebrated ſeat of empire, had become the theatre of artful policy and circumvention, and was remarkable for reducing to practice many of thoſe maxims, which Machiavel about this time digeſted into a ſyſtem, and propagated with ſuch applauſe through the courts and ſtates of Europe. The Guiſes were too impetuous in their ambition to invent or ſtudy ſuch refinements; but they perceived the advantages of them upon occaſions, and learned by degrees from queen Catharine the elements of political craft and diſſimulation.

May.

The court deliberates about preventing inſurrections.

After the court party had revenged themſelves upon the conſpiracy in the manner we have related, they began to deliberate, privately, upon meaſures proper for preventing all ſuch inſurrections againſt the government. It was * obvious that the princes of Bourbon and their adherents endeavoured to maintain a ſtated oppoſition to their authority; whilſt, at the ſame time, the pretenſions they had to a ſhare of the adminiſtration, were too much favoured by cuſtom and common opinion to admit of a ſummary procedure againſt them. The Guiſes were, therefore, prevailed upon to deſiſt from the perſecution of the prince of Conde, as a deſign which ſeemed arbitrary, and might be attended with dangerous conſequences, unleſs it were conducted in a more legal and ſmoother form. They were convinced that even the ſingle forfeiture of his life would not prove a deciſive ſtroke to his party; while not only the king of Navarre, but the Colignis, the conſtable, and other lords united with him, were left in full capacity to act in

* D'Avila, liv. ii.

whatever

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And reſolves to call an aſſembly of the notables.

whatever way their diſpoſition to faction or revenge might incline them. To render their plan of procedure more complete, and to remove all jealouſies of their ſecret purpoſes, it was agreed that inſtead of treating the prince of Conde as an obnoxious perſon, they ſhould appear to penetrate no further into the ſcheme of the conſpiracy, or ſeek any more particular detection of its abettors, than what might be collected from the facts publicly known; and that, by pretending to regard the whole as the effect of inadvertency in the magiſtrates, and unforeſeen irregularities on account of religion, they ſhould endeavour to impreſs their adverſaries with the belief, that the concern and terror into which they had been thrown, rendered them entirely anxious and attentive to regulate the diſorders of the government to the ſatisfaction of all parties. Whilſt they aſſumed this ſemblance of facility and moderation to public view, they reſolved to increaſe the military force of the court, to watch the ſuſpected towns and provinces; and being thus prepared to conveen a great council of the provinces, peers, and officers of the crown at Fountainbleau, upon the twentieth of Auguſt, where they might have opportunity to obſerve the temper of the party-leaders, and by gaining them over or diſuniting them, endeavour to counteract the factious deſigns of the princes of Bourbon *. It is ſaid by de Thou, that the Guiſes began, ſuddenly, to abate of their harſhneſs, and ſoften their behaviour towards the adverſe party, but he leaves it doubtful whether this alteration of their conduct proceeded from artifice or fear. He alledges, that the queen mother was adviſed by them to call an aſſembly of the chief lords at Fountainbleau; whilſt other hiſtorians aſcribe this to a ſecret reſolution taken by Catherine herſelf, to ballance the power

* Liv. xxv. p. 508.

of

of the Guiſes by raiſing the credit of their adverſaries. Moſt probable it ſeems, that the Guiſes ſuſpended their animoſity againſt the princes of Bourbon and their faction, in conſequence of a more deliberate ſcheme being concerted for their overthrow, and that the queen mother, though privy to this purpoſe, might regulate matters in ſuch a manner as to have it in her power to advance or interrupt the execution of it. 1560.

THE court party not only endeavoured, by unuſual complaiſance, to diſſipate the ſiniſter impreſſions which their former behaviour might have made on the prince of Conde, but alſo ſtudied to engage others who were offended, to forget their diſguſts and jealouſies, and enter into terms of amity and confidence with them. They ſhewed a great deference to the opinion of the admiral Coligni, and teſtified their regard to ſeveral of his friends, by tranſmitting to them obliging letters of commiſſion, and appointing them to execute charges of truſt and importance. The old conſtable Montmorency received letters from the king, directing him to repair to the parliament of Paris, and in his name to acquaint that body with the treaſonable deſign of the conſpirators at Amboiſe. In diſcharging this commiſſion *, the conſtable choſe not to imitate the ſtyle of the court, by which the defeat of the conſpiracy was repreſented to be a ſervice no leſs momentuous than the preſervation of the king and royal family from deſtruction; but, whilſt he beſtowed encomiums on the Guiſes, he artfully inſinuated that the ruin of their authority was the main object of the conſpiracy. The parliament, however, thought it not unbecoming them to conform to the tone of the court; and in their letter to his majeſty, to give the duke of Guiſe the magnificent title of *ſaviour* June.

* Mem. de Caſtelnau, liv. i. chap. 9.

of

BOOK II.

1560.

The title of ſaviour of his country given by the parliament to the duke of Guiſe.

of his country. The uncuſtomary honour of a particular addreſs was likewiſe paid him *. De Thou pronounces this teſtimony of applauſe a piece of ſervile adulation; and it may be allowed, that the language of the court of parliament at this juncture rather exaggerated the duke of Guiſe's merit, than expreſſed, impartially, the idea of the ſervice done by him to the ſtate; the growing diſorders of which had been diſcovered by the late inſurrection, and ſtimulated more than allayed by the manner in which it was ſuppreſſed. Copies of the king's letters to the parliament were alſo diſpatched to the governors of the different provinces, in which the proteſtants were arraigned as the incendiaries of rebellion; and ſpecial orders given to prevent their turbulent deſigns †. Replies to this charge were publiſhed by ſome of that party, who endeavoured to retaliate upon the Guiſes, by challenging them to account before an aſſembly of the ſtates for the tenor of their adminiſtration. An epiſtle with the royal ſignature, wrote in a more artful and elaborate ſtrain, was addreſſed to the king of Navarre, as governor of Guienne. In it the conſpiracy was declared to be a horrible and deſperate attempt to cut off the royal family, and change the form of government; and the alledgances againſt the prince of Conde were intimated, and explained into wicked calumny and prevarication. The ſatisfaction which his majeſty felt from the conviction of his innocence was expreſſed; and the king of Navarre ſolicited to exert his authority, in ſuppreſſing the diſaffected, and bringing the rebellious to condign puniſhment.

IN the preamble to the edicts, and letters patent, tranſmitted to the parliaments and provinces of the kingdom, for ſummoning

* Thuan. ibid. p. 506. † Ibid.

the

the aſſembly of the princes and great lords at Fontainbleau *, it was ſignified that his majeſty, though highly incenſed by the late criminal deſign againſt his perſon and government, choſe to teſtify his lenity rather than ſhew his juſt indignation; and in order to gain the hearts of the diſaffected by indulgence, would pardon all paſt offences occaſioned by errors in religion, on condition that thoſe who were culpable conformed themſelves for the future to the catholick faith, and yielded obedience to the magiſtrates. To which effect he forbid the courts of parliament to proceed upon former informations, with reſpect to religious caſes, and only required them by ſtrict attention and vigilance, to prevent the growth of ſuch diſorders, and to curb the inlet to them from unlawful aſſemblies. It was added, that by means of the enſuing convention of the grandees, all communities and particular perſons might have an opportunity afforded them to repreſent any abuſes in the public adminiſtration, and to apply for ſuitable redreſs of grievances in a regular manner.

After threats, lenity is affected by the court.

SUCH public acts and declarations, being joined to particular marks of favour and confidence ſhewn to the prince of Condé, and the friends of his party, diſpoſed many to drop their animoſity and ſuſpicions, and to believe that the court really intended to adjuſt the conteſts which had unhappily broke forth, on ſome more amicable and popular plan †. The chancellor de l'Hoſpital, who favoured moderate meaſures, found in the ſphere of his authority, the advantage derived from them. The members of the court of parliament had reaſon, on account of his early education amongſt them, and of the reſpect and deference he had always ſhewed to

* D'Avila, ibid. † Thuan. ibid. p. 513. D'Avila, ibid.

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their conſtitutional privileges, to believe him a ſincere and hearty well wiſher to the honour and reputation of their body. They knew alſo, that, though diſpoſed to maintain the catholic faith, he had an averſion to violence and perſecution. When therefore the edict dated from Romorantin in Berry was publiſhed, which aboliſhed the power of appeal to the court of parliament in trials for hereſy, they did not remonſtrate againſt this invaſion of their authority, in the manner they had done five years before, but allowed themſelves to be perſuaded by the chancellor, that ſuch privilege gave room to evaſions of judgment, and became a ſcreen to the ſeditious, by which they were emboldened to diſturb the public peace. Beſides that this edict contained ſeveral other articles, which appeared to be framed on mature deliberation, and adapted to the exigencies of the ſtate; it was alſo underſtood, that the judgment of heretical cauſes being thus formally conſigned to the biſhops or their vicars, without the benefit of an appeal, even to the chief tribunal, there would hardly remain any argument for admitting the exorbitant power of the inquiſition, which the court of Rome inceſſantly endeavoured to eſtabliſh. The writers of that time, as de Thou tells us, not only did juſtice to the chancellor, by accounting for his procedure with reſpect to the edict of Romorantin, upon this motive of chuſing a leſs evil, in order to get rid of a greater; but likewiſe applauded his foreſight and prudence in the determination of a matter ſo critical and intereſting. Such qualities of mind, joined to moderation, are at all times highly valuable, and become more conſpicuous and uſeful, when exhibited, as upon this occaſion, under the umbrage of undiſtinguiſhing zeal and bigotry.

Edict of Romorantin, about religious cauſes.

1560.

July.

BUT effects being only proportionable to their cauſes, this ſcheme of the court, which was directed to pacify the animoſities of parties, rather from the neceſſity of the meaſure, than in conſequence of a real diſpoſition, or determined plan of union, could not be ſuppoſed to prove altogether ſucceſsful. The prince of Condé not only retained his reſentment, but ſeemed to feel afreſh the late indignities he ſuffered, by being marked out in the king's letters as one accuſed of guilt; and after being openly affronted, put to the neceſſity of receiving and truſting a faint and precarious vindication. Apprehenſive of danger whilſt he ſtayed at court, and was amuſed with ſuſpicious and empty profeſſions of friendſhip, from thoſe whoſe enmity againſt him he had proved, and afraid to expoſe his character to more aſperſions by a haſty departure, he continued for ſome time undetermined what courſe to follow ‡. At length he reſolved to betake himſelf to a place of greater ſafety; and having acquainted the king of Navarre of the diſhonour caſt upon him by the Guiſes, and the reaſons he had to dread their machinations againſt him, he ſet out ſpeedily on the way to Berne, to viſit his brother. This prince had obviated all ſiniſter reflexions upon his conduct in the time of the conſpiracy, by diſperſing a conſiderable body of men in Guienne, whom Renaudie had incited to take arms; and in compliance with the king's order, afterwards exerted himſelf in expelling the diſaffected. Upon receiving advice of the prince of Condé's retreat from court, as he thought it became him to appear uniform and cautious in his conduct, and to have his brother's honour vindicated with the utmoſt formality, he wrote to him, that from regard to his reputation, it was fit he ſhould delay his journey to

The prince of Condé, apprehenſive of danger, retires to Berne.

‡ Thuan. ibid.

Book II. 1560. Berne until he had preſented himſelf again at court, and rendered the atteſtations of his innocence the more unqueſtionable. The prince of Condé however informed, that the cardinal of Lorain had once moved in the cabinet-council, to have him ſeized; and convinced that ſome ſnare was laid for him, did not comply with this propoſal; but looking upon ſome letters which he received from the Guiſes, which ſeemed purpoſely wrote to court his ſtay, as a further confirmation of his diſtruſt, he uſed the greateſt diſpatch in his journey, and ſoon came to an interview with the king of Navarre.

And the Colignis deſire leave to withdraw.

If the prince of Condé's temper and ſituation might be reckoned too nice and ſingular to admit of his being appeaſed, even by the moſt unexceptionable methods of addreſs the court party could employ, this cannot be alledged to have been the caſe with the Colignis, who yet found ſufficient reaſon to be diſguſted, and to leave the court in much the ſame humour. The admiral being called to frequent conferences with the queen mother, had uttered his ſentiments of the adminiſtration with freedom, and condemned the meaſures of the Guiſes as dictated by ambition and violence. He perceived in a ſhort time, that he only expoſed himſelf to prejudice and danger by ſuch ingenuity, whilſt ſhe encountered it with her wonted policy and equivocation *. Upon his petitioning for leave to be gone from court, he was ordered to direct his courſe to Normandy, and uſe his utmoſt endeavours to ſettle ſome commotions that were breaking out in that province; and at the ſame time to diſcover and inform the queen mother from whence ſuch ſeditions took their riſe. What he thought hazardous to inſiſt upon whilſt

* D'Aubigne, liv. ii. chap. 18.

he

he was within the verge of the court, he ſcrupled not, when he was got at a proper diſtance, to commit to writing. In his anſwer to this commiſſion, he aſſured the queen, that the too abſolute power of the Guiſes, and the inceſſant perſecution of the proteſtants, produced thoſe tumults and diſorders which were become ſo frequent and dangerous in the kingdom; and that, as they could not be expected to end whilſt the cauſe of them ſubſiſted, ſhe ought to aſſume a larger ſhare in the management of affairs; and by enforcing the obſervance of thoſe late decrees which reſtrained former violent proceſſes for religion, carefully guard againſt the breach of the public tranquility.

As the queen mother affected to keep correſpondence with the different parties, and ſit umpire of their mutual complaints and invectives, without having any formed ſcheme or intention to terminate their animoſities; ſo the Guiſes thought it ſufficient condeſcendence in them, to give thoſe public aſſurances of their inclination to moderation and lenity, without pretending to oblige their antagoniſts by particular conceſſions in their favour, or even ſtudying to ſuppreſs former feuds and antipathies †. At this time, when the court ſhewed a diſpoſition to concord, the Guiſes could not avoid entering into a new quarrel with the houſe of Montmorency, upon the ſubject of a private law-ſuit; from the general account of which we may judge of their propenſity to turbulent diſputes, and underſtand in what ſhape queſtions of civil right and property were then liable to be controverted. Two uterine brothers, whoſe names were Boulainvilliers and Ramburie, had a plea depending before the parliament of Paris, for the poſſeſſion of a

A turbulent diſpute in a law proceſs between the Guiſes and Montmorencies.

† Thuan. ibid. p. 508.

Book II. 1560. lordſhip or barony, to which each of them pretended a ſeparate title, by the ſpecial will or deſtination of their common mother. The riſque and charges of the proceſs, it ſeems, determined Boulainvilliers to ſell his claim; the purchaſe of which was made by the conſtable Montmorency. The tranſaction was no ſooner known to the duke of Guiſe, than he applied to the other brother, and for payment of a large ſum of money obtained an aſſignation to his right. Having notified to Montmorency, in the way of defiance, that he was the party againſt whom the law-ſuit was now to be maintained, he privately ſolicited Boulainvilliers to make a new conveyance of his claim, in name of a free gift to his brother the cardinal of Lorain. In the mean time both the noble competitors procured royal patents, which aſcertained them to be proper parties in the cauſe, and put them on the foot of the former claimants. The liſts being thus fenced, they prepared on each ſide for an obſtinate conteſt. The friends and adherents of both flocked to the city, and inflamed the diſpute. The court of parliament apprehending an open broil would enſue, to preſerve their own dignity, and inſure the public peace, interpoſed a decree, that without regard to the new arrangement of parties, the proceſs, as it had been commenced, ſhould be carried on and finiſhed, in the name and behalf of the original competitors. Many of the nobles who were not attached to the conſtable, were highly incenſed againſt the duke of Guiſe, who in this affair appeared to them to diſcover an invidious and diſhonourable enmity againſt his rival, already humbled, and an inſolence equally diſguſting to friends and enemies. Henry D'Amville, Montmorency's ſecond ſon, prompted by this recent provocation, and the murmurs expreſſed againſt the duke of Guiſe by the nobility, took the reſolution to

come to court, and propoſe to the king, that he ſhould diſmiſs from his ſervice a perſon whoſe private feuds and differences proved the greateſt obſtacle to the public tranquility. Though the Guiſes and the queen mother underſtood this, they diſſembled their diſpleaſure, from an apprehenſion that D'Amville's preſumption aroſe from ſome deeper project of diſturbance entered into with the prince of Condé, whom he had converſed with in his way to court. The Spaniſh envoy Thomas Chantonay, cardinal Granvel's brother, having alſo thrown out before queen Catharine, that he knew of no better expedient for accommodating the diſſentions of the ſtate, than that the duke of Guiſe ſhould for a time withdraw from court; they were impreſſed more ſtrongly with this jealouſy; but it was moſt probable he only meant by this ſuggeſtion, to diſtract their counſels.

Queen Catharine hears the apologiſts of the proteſtants in private.

ALTHOUGH the queen mother diſguiſed from the admiral her ſentiments of the Guiſes adminiſtration, and ſhewed no inclination to enter into any meaſures with him for diminiſhing their authority; yet ſhe appears to have ſtruck into a political tract of her own, which had a tendency to that end. It is indeed difficult to form a preciſe judgment of the various ſteps of her crafty conduct. The view ſhe had at this time, in reading ſome writings addreſſed to her in favour of the proteſtants, and conferring with thoſe who could inform her of their political and religious maxims, whilſt the cardinal of Lorain being on the ſecret of theſe interviews, was admitted unſeen, to overhear what paſſed, will ſcarce admit of any more rational explication, than that ſhe wanted to diſcover her ability in procuring intelligence, and to make the cardinal an ear-witneſs of many popular, and ſome plauſible objections, which were urged againſt the aggrandizement of his family. If ſhe only

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only * thought, as de Thou inſinuates in his narrative, of expiſcating ſecrets, and making diſcoveries beyond what was already known about the conſpiracy; her aim proved altogether vain and fruitleſs. From † whatever motive ſhe acted, thoſe private audiences ſhe gave to ſome proteſtant apologiſts began a ſort of correſpondence with that party, hitherto unuſual at court, and which ſhe kept up afterwards, and underſtood to render ſubſervient to the different ſchemes and purpoſes ſhe purſued.

Auguſt.

The time fixed for the aſſembly of the nobles at Fontainbleau now approached; and the attendance of the king of Navarre, and the prince of Condé, was urged by letters addreſſed to them both from his majeſty ‡. In order to deliberate upon the meaſures neceſſary to be taken, they had convened a meeting of their adherents, without being able to form a poſitive concluſion. Their irreſolution and want of unanimity, diſpoſed them to think it the ſafeſt courſe to keep at a diſtance; and they excuſed their abſence to the king, under pretence of the ſhort warning they had to prepare for the journey, and ſome domeſtic hindrances. This was an unlucky iſſue of their counſels, which tended to produce further confuſion. It expreſſed an improper diſtruſt of their influence amongſt the nobility, as well as a dread of the court faction, weakened the efforts of their friends, and increaſed the vigilance and induſtry of their enemies. Inſtead of appearing to be prompted with zeal for the public ſervice, or inclined to ſeek a reformation of the government in this regular form; they ſeemed only to conſider their perſonal ſafety, and to prefer the dictates of fear and private reſentment, to more generous and laudable motives. The choice made by them of an agent in time of the aſſembly,

The princes of Bourbon reſolve to abſent from the meeting of Fontainbleau.

* Lib. xxv. p. 510. † Caſtlenau, liv. 2. p. 44 ‡ Thuan. ibid.

who

who was a Gaſcoon called de la Sague, without prudence or ſecrecy ſuitable to ſuch a truſt, ſhowed them to be no leſs unfortunate in their judgment of men, than of the meaſures they choſe to follow. Book II. 1560.

THOUGH the court, with a ſort of military parade, unuſual on like occaſions, proceeded to Fontainbleau, the place fixed for the convention of the notables; yet the chief lords of the oppoſite party were under no apprehenſions about making their appearance. As if they had only wanted ſuch an opportunity to diſplay their comparative ſtrength †, the conſtable Montmorency, and his ſons Francis the marſhal and Henry lord Damvil, the admiral Coligni and his two brothers, the prince of Porcien, and the vidame of Chartres, arrived two days after, followed by a train of more than eight hundred gentlemen.

THE aſſembly was opened in the queen mother's apartment, where benches were fitted up for the prelates and peers, who took their places according to their dignity and rank. Next to the king and his brothers, were ſeated the cardinals of Bourbon, Lorain, and Guiſe; the dukes of Guiſe and Aumale; the conſtable Montmorency, and the chancellor; the admiral Coligni, and the marſhals St. André and Briſſac, and the biſhops of Orleans, Vienne, and Valence. The reſt of the lords, barons, and officers of ſtate, ſtood ranged without diſtinction upon a lower floor of the chamber *. The king in a few words ſignified the reaſons he had for calling together the aſſembly; and the queen mother enforced what he ſaid, with an exhortation to all preſent to deliver their ſen- Auguſt 20th. The aſſembly of the Notables is opened.

† D'Avila, ibid. D'Aubigne, liv. ii. * Thuan. ibid.

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timents of public affairs with unbiaſſed candour and impartiality. The chancellor de l'Hoſpital, in a formal ſpeech, repreſented, that the many diſorders of the kingdom demanded a ſpeedy remedy, which could not be properly applied until the cauſes of them were aſcertained; that, whether engendered by the diſputes about religion, or the extraordinary burdens impoſed in the late reign upon the people, or from the prevalence of faction, and the liſtleſs ambition of particular men, it was the king's earneſt deſire and purpoſe, to adviſe with the aſſembly about every exigence of the ſtate, and according to their opinions, to regulate his meaſures for reſtoring the quiet and unanimity of his ſubjects. Then † the duke of Guiſe acquainted them with the particulars of the military eſtabliſhment, of which he had the charge; and the cardinal of Lorain gave an account of the public revenues; from which he inferred, that the expences of the government greatly exceeded the whole amount of the public finances. The aſſembly was then adjourned.

The admiral preſents the petition of the Hugonots.

The day following, when they were again convened, the king ordered the members of his privy-council to deliver their opinions in the uſual form ‡. The biſhop of Valence, as the youngeſt and loweſt in place, was preparing to ſpeak; but the admiral Coligni riſing from his ſeat, prevented him. After a humble and repeated obeiſance with the knee, he placed himſelf before the king, and preſented two papers. Theſe were petitions he ſaid, which were given him by a vaſt concourſe of people, of various denominations, when he was in Normandy, haſtening the preparations for the expedition to Scotland; and that as he had promiſed

† D'Avila, ibid. ‡ Thuan. ibid.

to

to take the charge of recommending them to his majeſty, he now performed what he thought conſiſtent with his duty and honour, in confidence that the whole courſe of his behaviour hitherto, might aſſure his majeſty of his integrity and zeal for his ſervice. The king having commended his fidelity and diligence, the papers were given to l'Aubeſpine the ſecretary, to be read aloud in the aſſembly. They contained in ſubſtance a ſupplication to his majeſty, that he would be pleaſed to ſhew tenderneſs towards his ſubjects of the proteſtant perſuaſion, who had no other aim but to conform themſelves to the doctrine and principles of the goſpel, and inſtead of favouring tenets pernicious to regular government and ſociety, deſired to live under the protection of the laws, and claimed the free exerciſe of their religion, that they might not, by reſorting to private meetings, ſeem chargeable with oppoſition to them, and be expoſed to many injurious calumnies from thoſe, who from ignorance or malice, were inclined to render them odious to the public. The king then deſired the privy-counſellors to give their opinions. John de Monluc, biſhop of Valence, ſpoke firſt, and expreſſed himſelf in a manner no leſs bold than eloquent, with reſpect to the corruptions and abuſes in the church and ſtate *. He complained of the miſapplication of the pontifical authority to the purpoſes of wordly policy and ambition, of the ſhameful indolence of many biſhops, of whom he had counted, he ſaid, to the number of forty at one time, taking their pleaſure at Paris, and indulging themſelves in all the diverſions and irregularities of a diſſipated life; while their paſtoral functions were either totally neglected, or committed to novices and perſons unworthy to perform them. When the biſhops, who were the eyes of the church,

Speech of Monlus biſhop of Valence, on the corruptions of the church.

* Ibid.

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were thus blinded; he alledged that it could not be ſurpriſing, that the inferior members, eſpecially the laiety of all ranks, ſhould run into error and confuſion. He inſiſted that a reformation of manners, and the pious example of thoſe in ſacred and civil offices, would have a more powerful tendency to hinder defections from the faith, than all the ſeverities which had been uſed; and that the king and his houſehold ſhould encourage the hearing of ſermons, by having the holy ſcriptures daily read and explained before them. Here turning to queen Catharine and the king's conſort, he beſeeched them to baniſh the profane and indecent ſongs of the court, and tune their voices to the purer melody of the pſalms in French verſe, in the uſage of which it was abſurd to ſuppoſe there could be either hereſy or ſin. He then propoſed that application ſhould be made for holding a general council, to diſcuſs the religious controverſies, and rectify the abuſes complained of in the church; and in caſe this were evaded by the political arts of the court of Rome, that his majeſty, by virtue of his own authority, which was warranted by the example of many of his predeceſſors, ſhould convocate a national council for eſtabliſhing the peace and welfare of his kingdom; and that in the mean time the power of the magiſtrate which had been exerted with much latitude and ſmall ſucceſs in religious caſes, ſhould be directed to the adminiſtration of penalties with prudent reſerve and moderation.

Followed by that of Marillac archbiſhop of Vienne.

MARILLAC, archbiſhop of Vienne, ſpoke after him, in a more vehement tone *. He ſaid, that a general council was indeed the deſirable and proper remedy for the religious diſſentions; but that the court of Rome, according to its wonted craft, would

* Ibid.

fruſtrate

fruſtrate the moſt zealous applications that could be made for it; that the danger being ſo imminent they ought not to riſque the delay and uncertainty attending ſuch a ſcheme, but have immediate recourſe to a national council, as the ſureſt and beſt expedient. The ſcandalous retreat of biſhops from their charges, he declared to be a ſubject of public inquiry and animadverſion, and that much more culpable was that licenſed ſacrilege of Italian abſentees, who, to the diſhonour of God, and the ruin of the kingdom, were ſuffered to prey on a third part of the benefices of the church, and enjoy the ſpoils of the vineyards they never viſited. With ſuch a fatal gangrene in the boſom of the church, it was no wonder that the catholic faith decayed, erroneous opinions abounded amongſt the people, and dangerous tumults diſtracted the government. It was time he ſaid, that the beaſts of Babylon, *Simony*, which had long ravaged the ſanctuary, ſhould be overthrown; and if this were not ſpeedily effected, that the prediction of St. Bernard would certainly be fulfilled by Chriſt himſelf deſcending from heaven to take the ſcourge again, and drive the prieſts from the temple, as he had done the money changers. That as, next to the maintenance of religion and piety, the loyalty of the people to the ſovereign was the beſt ſupport of government; he ſaid, the moſt proper incentive he knew for this, was the calling of an aſſembly of the ſtates of the kingdom, which, agreeable to the antient inſtitution and uſage of the monarchy, became the ſtated channel of intercourſe betwixt the different members that compoſed it; the center of their mutual intelligence, and the foundation of free and voluntary union and coherence amongſt them.

THESE two prelates were underſtood to expreſs, not only their own private ſentiments, but thoſe of ſeveral others of the clerical order,

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order, who either ſecretly favoured the proteſtant doctrines, or deſired to ſee the Gallican church altogether freed from the pontifical yoke. The admiral Coligni, who had miniſtred fuel to the debates, by preſenting the petition of the proteſtants, and hoped to quell the indignation of the courtiers, by exciting their fears, failed not the next day of the aſſembly, to ſhew the ſame boldneſs and freedom in giving his opinion †. He told them, that when he aſked thoſe who gave him the petitions to ſubſcribe them, the anſwer returned to him was, that whenever his majeſty ſhould order this to be done, above a hundred and fifty thouſand of his people would be ready to ſign them. He alledged, that for ſecuring the affections of the people to the king, it was highly proper to remove from about the royal perſon, whatever might create a diſtruſt in his mind of the attachment of his ſubjects to him, and have the appearance of compelling them into obedience; but that the contrary rule appeared to be followed by thoſe who acted as guardians to the young ſovereign. A formidable ‡ train of guards was muſtered around him, and ſuch a ſpectacle of terror diſcovered in his appearance, as was rather apt to quench than cheriſh the principles of loyalty. The duke of Guiſe, piqued at this ſpeech, repreſented it as a petulent reflexion on the known wiſdom of the queen mother, and the laudable diligence ſhe had beſtowed in cultivating with ſucceſs the moſt generous and worthy ſentiments in the mind of her ſon, the heir of the crown. The horrid plots which were performed againſt the king's ſacred perſon and royalty, he ſaid, afforded a flagrant reaſon for arming his retinue for the protection of both, the ſeditious being anſwerable for any change of this kind that was made. As to matters of religion, he declared

What is ſaid by Coligni provokes a warm reply from the duke of Guiſe.

† Caſtelnau, liv. ii. p. 46. ‡ Matthieu, liv. iv. p. 227.

that

that he ſubmitted to the judgment of the more ſtudious and learned; but proteſted that no councils whatever ſhould have ſo much authority or weight with him, as to make him depart in the leaſt from the religion of his anceſtors, eſpecially in what related to the article of the holy maſs.

And from the cardinal of Lorain.

THE cardinal of Lorain concluded the debates with an invective againſt the petitions, which, though expreſſed in a ſubmiſſive ſtyle, he ſaid, ſhewed too plainly the ſeditious ſpirit of the party that offered them. For what other * conſtruction could their arrogant words bear, that a hundred and fifty thouſand perſons would ſubſcribe theſe papers, than that they boaſted of their numbers, and hoped to terrify the king and court. But this menace might well be deſpiſed by thoſe who remembered, that there were a million of faithful ſubjects diſpoſed to maintain the honour and dignity of the crown, in oppoſition to the inſults of the diſaffected and heretical. To petition for temples, and the public exerciſe of their religion, he ſaid, was an inſufferable inſtance of their preſumption, and amounted to the ſame thing as if they had required his majeſty to approve and authorize the peculiar doctrines they taught, when the council of Trent had already conſidered, and condemned many of them as erroneous. That, for regulating the manners of eccleſiaſtics, and reforming particular abuſes in the government of the church of France, he thought an aſſembly of the divines and prelates was all that was requiſite to be propoſed; and in the mean time, that the biſhops and their vicars might be enjoined to prepare an index of thoſe matters which needed correction, and to ſend advice to his majeſty within two months, of

* Thuan. ibid. Caſtlenau, ibid.

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their diligence and progreſs in this work, in order that he might appoint a convenient time and place for their meeting. He added, that though he was perſuaded the pretences of conſcience, and of zeal for the goſpel, were artfully employed to the purpoſes of ſedition, he would not however oppoſe ſuch a mitigation of the legal penalties as extended only to thoſe who met for religious worſhip in a private and peaceable manner; nor diſagree to the propoſal of requeſting his majeſty to call the aſſembly of the ſtates.

A reſolution of the aſſembly to call a meeting of the ſtates-general and of the clergy.

The day following, the majority of the ſmaller barons ſignified their approbation of what the cardinal of Lorain had propoſed. Then, without further heſitation, a decree was framed, which ordained the aſſembly of the ſtates to be held in the city of Meaux, on the tenth of December following. The biſhops were required to be ready to meet upon the tenth of January, in whatever place his majeſty ſhould think fit to name to them, to deliberate about convening a national council, in caſe the pope, by affected delays, ſhould baffle their expectations of his aſſembling a general one. The king's lieutenants and governors of provinces, were enjoined to be vigilant in ſuppreſſing all tumultuary meetings, and a ſuſpenſion of legal proſecutions on account of religion, unleſs when they involved ſome civil crime or offence, was appointed to take place. The king having by his chancellor thanked all who were preſent for their attendance, and granted the ratification of theſe ſeveral edicts, the aſſembly was diſmiſſed with a requiſition to the chief lords, to preſent themſelves within the limited time, and aſſiſt at the meeting of the ſtates-general at Meaux.

Auguſt 25th.

From the unexpected reſolution of the court to hold this convention of the Notables; the faint oppoſition made by the Guiſes

to ſeveral points of great importance to them; and the haſty concluſion of the aſſembly, without any propoſal tending to eſtabliſh the authority or intereſt of their party, it may be preſumed, that certain views and ends were purſued by them, which required further opportunity and addreſs for their accompliſhment. When theſe facts are attended to, it can be hardly doubted, that to get the princes of Bourbon within the graſp of their power, and have their perſons and lives at their diſpoſal, was the capital object of the policy of the Guiſes, and the aim of theſe inexplicable movements they made at this juncture *. As d'Avila ſtates it, the convention of Fontainbleau was agreed upon as an intermediate meaſure neceſſary to prevent ſuſpicions of their calling an aſſembly of the ſtates, a reſolution which the kings were ſeldom inclined to fix upon, unleſs in urgent difficulties of the ſtate. The firſt motion of it proceeding from thoſe in oppoſition to the court, and being conſented to by the Guiſes, as it would appear rather to avoid importunity and altercation, than from choice, the very appearance of deſign in the court party would be concealed from the moſt penetrating and ſuſpicious. The grand project of arreſting the princes of Bourbon, and of proceeding to try capitally, and condemn one or both of them, was conſidered as dangerous, and hardly practicable in the preſent circumſtances of the government, under any authority leſs than that of the ſtates-general, which was underſtood to carry along with it that of the whole kingdom.

THOUGH in this view of the aſſembly at Fontainbleau, the decrees which paſſed may be regarded as only ſo many ſtratagems

* Liv. ii. P. Daniel, p. 685.

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and feints of the court, which hardly merit that diſtinct conſideration due to public reſolutions; yet ſince the different parties, and the nation in general, were highly intereſted in them, they ought not to be mentioned without ſome particular reflexions. By being obliged to make this aſſembly of the nobles a particular part of their political plan, the court party offered their adverſaries the wiſhed for occaſion of introducing their petitions and demands, in a manner the moſt reputable and advantageous. The admiral Coligni's maſculine addreſs, his denunciation of the numbers of the proteſtant petitions, the violent ſpeeches of the clergy againſt the corrupt diſcipline of the church, and other particular animadverſions on the ſyſtem of the government, were incidents which would add to the reputation of thoſe in oppoſition to the court; and at the ſame time were ſuch as might be expected to caſt up in this concourſe of the nobility. The reſolutions and decrees in which they acquieſced, ſeem to be the inevitable conſequence of ſuch public deliberations and debates being once propounded and carried on under the patronage of the higheſt authority. The order to forward a national council, and the indirect toleration granted to the proteſtants, were certainly conceſſions undeſigned by the court, and may be juſtly conſidered as argument which prove either their want of foreſight of the conſequence of ſubmitting ſuch points to the judgment of a promiſcuous meeting of prelates and peers, or the weakneſs and impropriety of their ſcheme, which could not be promoted without running into inconſiſtencies, and ſuffering their antagoniſts to obtain what ſeemed a conſiderable victory over them.

If the Guiſes be ſuppoſed to have ſchemed the ſeizing the prince of Condé and his brother, upon their coming to Fontainbleau, or

the detaining them priſoners at the diſmiſſion of the aſſembly; they would ſoon be convinced, by a review of their reſpective adherents, that their deſign could not be accompliſhed. The conſtable, his two nephews, and their friends, had ſuch a multiplicity of attendants as nearly equalled the whole military bands of the court. The retinue of the princes added to it would have given them a viſible ſuperiority. By the reſolution of abſenting themſelves, the princes of Bourbon loſt a ſignal opportunity of bidding defiance to their enemies at court, and demanding in a public aſſembly, that ſhare in the government to which the privilege of blood was generally underſtood to intitle them. The total oblivion of them and their intereſt in an aſſembly conſiſting of ſo many of their friends, perhaps diſpoſed the court party more eaſily to yield to other motions that were made, and to gratify the diſcontented with ſome articles of indulgence, when the Bourbon princes interpoſed not to ſolicit them.

NOTWITHSTANDING, by their keeping at a diſtance from the court, the king of Navarre and his brother ſecured themſelves againſt perſonal attacks, which might be meditated by their enemies, a diſcovery was made to their diſadvantage through the folly of la Sague *, whom they employed to negotiate for them at Fountainbleau. This man was a true gaſcoon, meeting with one named Bonvalle, an old comrad that had ſerved in the army with him in Piedmont, began to tell him, that he had heard how his maſters of the court party had undervalued his ſervices, and that he was now, for good reaſons, become a well-wiſher to the king of Navarre, and therefore he hoped to carry him along with him to

* D'Aubigne, ibid. chap. 19. Thuan. ibid.

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Guienne. Upon his appearing to agree to all this, la Sage makes him a confident; and, without further ſcruple, informs him of all that he underſtood, or could conjecture, about the deſigns of the princes of Bourbon, aſſuring him, that having long complained of the injuries done them by the Guiſes, they were now prepared to take revenge; and that all matters were already ſo ordered for the purpoſe, that the king and the Guiſes, though warned and united for their defence, would find it impoſſible to evade the impending blows. Bonvalle, who thought only of the ſhorteſt way to make his fortune, went directly and gave the important intelligence to his captain, the Marſhal Briſſac, who communicated it to the duke of Guiſe. Bonvalle was ordered to renew his conferences with la Sague, and draw from him all the particulars of the ſecret; and one of the queen's domeſtics was directed to watch his departure. La Sague having ſet out on his journey to Guienne, and got as far as Eſtampes, was purſued and over-taken, and carried back priſoner as privately as poſſible, with all the papers and letters he had about him, directed to the king of Navarre and the prince of Condé. The Guiſes were overjoyed, when they found in this packet letters from the lords of Montmorency, and ſeveral other nobility of the oppoſite faction. Upon the peruſal of them, they were much baulked in their expectations, as they contained nothing beyond the ſtrain of compliments and civilities, uſual in letters to friends. Only thoſe of Francis of Vendoſme, the Vidame of Chartres, were alledged to be ſo compoſed, either by the artificial arrangement of the lines, or ſome other more obſcure device, that they might admit of a double explication; and they clearly bore his promiſe to aſſiſt the prince of Condé in any undertaking for his majeſty's ſervice. This ſuppoſition, though not verified by any experiment, was inſiſted upon to prove them criminal, and pro-

Is arreſted with his letters.

duced

duced the effect of full conviction againſt the Vidame *, who was a profeſſed enemy to the duke of Guiſe; and for particular reaſons, unfortunately at this time, was as much hated as he had been formerly careſſed by the queen mother. His letters being ſent to the preſident de Thou at Paris, with the king's orders to apprehend him, he was immediately ſhut up a cloſe priſoner in the Baſtile. La Sague and Bonvalle next underwent a ſeparate examination; and upon their contradicting each other they were confronted. The former ſtill refuſing that he had any other diſcovery to make than what might be collected from the letters; he was adjudged to ſuffer the rack, as acceſſary to the plot and guilty of miſpriſion. La Sague, who had not fortitude to ſtand the ſight of the iron torture, immediately came to his confeſſion. He declared that the prince of Condé, with the king of Navarre's conſent and approbation, had formed a ſcheme to raiſe a conſiderable body of men, under pretext of coming to pay his court to the king, and by ſurprize to take poſſeſſion of Poictiers, Tours and Orleans, which lay almoſt in the line of his journey; that he hoped to ſeize Paris by means of his alliance with the conſtable, whoſe ſon was governor of the city, and to make himſelf maſter of Picardy, by help of the lords Senar Pont, and Bouchavanne, and of Normandy, by the aſſiſtance of the duke of Eſtampes, entruſted with the government of it: having excited revolts through many other provinces of the kingdom, to march towards the court with all the forces of his friends and party, and compel the Guiſes to quit all pretenſions to the adminiſtration. He added, that he had private inſtructions to ſound the inclinations of the nobility, and diſpoſe them to reliſh the undertaking.

And examined by the torture.

* Brantome de Vidame du Chartres.

1560.

CHAP. II.

Insurrection in Lions suppressed—Evidences for a criminal accusation of the princes of Bourbon, sought by the court—Commotions in some provinces—Irresolution of the princes of Bourbon about attending the assembly of states—Military parade of the court to their assembly at Orleans—The princes of Bourbon induced to make their appearance there—Imprisonment of the prince of Condé.

THE dread of the prince of Condé to come within the verge of the court, and the jealousy of the designs of the Guises, with which his brother was easily impressed, had turned the former disgusts, and covered the enmity of these princes into more direct and animated purposes of vengeance. Separated from that party of their friends, who were the most fit and able to moderate and direct their resolutions, and beset and solicited by others eagerly inclined to wave the firebrand of sedition; they began to permit and encourage several insurrections through the towns and provinces. Four days after * Sague was apprehended, advice came to court from d'Achon, whom the marshal St. André, his uncle, had left governor at Lions in his absence, that the Hugonots had made an attempt upon that city, which by his vigilance had proved unsuccessful. There was the more ground to suspect that this project took its rise from the prince of Condé, since the younger Maligni, one of his zealous adherents, was the principal agent in it. As the city was very populous, and frequented by foreign merchants on account of its manufactures and trade, Maligni found it easy to introduce small parties of men, and convey arms into different houses occu-

An insurrection is promoted at Lions, by means of Maligni, in a partizan of the prince of Condé's.

* D'Avila, ibid. D'Aubigne, ibid.

pied

pied by ſome private abettors of the enterprize, without occaſioning any alarm or ſuſpicion. When all things were prepared, and ripened for action, he ſuddenly interrupted his diligence and procedure in the attempt; having received orders, as was believed, from the king of Navarre to that purpoſe. The conſtable Montmorency had wrote to that prince intreating him to come to court, and to forbear engaging in raſh and offenſive meaſures, that might create a prejudice againſt him, and hurt the reputation of his cauſe, which, as a public one, ought to be promoted in a conſiſtency with the peace and ſafety of the kingdom. This counſel prevailed with Navarre, and Maligni was commanded to deſiſt. But the accident of a diſcovery laid him under a neceſſity of diſobeying. Information being given to d'Achon, that ſeveral parcels of arms had been carried in the night time through the ſtreets, and lodged in the houſes of a particular diſtrict of the city; he ordered Pro, the chief deputy of the citizens, to put himſelf at the head of three hundred muſqueteers, and form a blockade about the places ſuſpected, which happened to be in the quarter, which lay near the confluence of the Rhone and the Saone. Thirty men of Maligni's party ſtood ready to oppoſe them, and boldly reſiſted their attack; till Maligni, being awaked in the middle of the night, came and joined them with near about as many more of his followers. They then beat back and wounded many of the aſſailants, and gaining poſſeſſion of the bridge over the Saone, preſerved their communication with that ſide of the town which lay before them, expecting to be reinforced from thence by their friends and accomplices. Being wearied out with fatigue through the night, and the approach of day bringing no proſpect of relief, they began to deſpair. D'Achon, though he underſtood their ſituation, choſe not to put their deſperate reſolution to the utmoſt trial, but ſatisfied to rid the city of them, gave

Who is defeated and obliged to fly.

orders

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orders to throw open the gates. They ſaw and embraced this opportunity of ſaving themſelves; and joined with ſome ſtragglers of their party, took flight from danger with all expedition. This proved a quarry, upon which the marſhal St. André haſtened to pitch. Having obtained a commiſſion from the king to inveſtigate the ſprings of the conſpiracy, and proſecute its ſecret fomenters, he employed it to ſatiate his neceſſitous greed. After the exaction * of a hundred thouſand crowns, which neither his fawning addreſs nor his threats could ſqueeze from the citizens, he endeavoured to compenſate this grievous diſappointment, by attacking ſeveral wealthy individuals, who could not ſo eaſily evade his inſidious proceſs, without making their money anſwer for their innocence. He got his commiſſion further extended to the neighbouring provinces of Dauphiny, Languedoc and Provence; that, under the ſhew of bringing the fugitive rebels to juſtice, he might enlarge the ſcene of depredations.

The court chuſes rather to provide ſecretly againſt the princes of Bourbon than make uſe of open force,

THE court was, by this time, ſufficiently advertized of the danger that threatened the ſtate, from the influence and power of the princes of Bourbon. They knew that their faction gradually increaſed in number and ſtrength, by being the reſource of the diſaffected, and the chief foundation on which all thoſe inclined to the proteſtant doctrines reſted their hope of protection and liberty. As they had, every day, a plainer proof that thoſe princes, inſtead of correſponding with the court, countenanced the mutinous, and behaved like thoſe who meditated an open rupture; it ſeemed that ſome more direct and ſpeedy remedy, than that which they had devized, ought to be applied to obviate ſuch imminent hazard to which the government was expoſed †. But mature reflexion

* Thuan. ibid. † D'Avila, ibid.

pointed

pointed out the advantage of adhering to their ſecret plan, which, without requiring greater force than the court was preſently poſſeſſed of, or exciting the princes of Bourbon to fix upon ſome ſcheme for their defence, would, more certainly, effectuate their ſuppreſſion, than the more impetuous method of open attack and hoſtility. Thoſe ill conducted inſurrections, which gave a preſent alarm, would alſo be conſidered by the court as public teſtimonies of the reſtleſs enmity and ambition of their adverſaries, and what would contribute to verify and aggravate the charge of treaſon they intended to exhibit at the aſſembly of the ſtates againſt the prince of Condé. Care was therefore taken in examining thoſe apprehended at Lions, and many other places, to induce them, by promiſes of life or the power of the rack, to furniſh materials for this impeachment of the princes. As ſuch confeſſions appeared moſt acceptable to the court, and ſeveral reaped benefit from them, la Sague thought it convenient to make a conſiderable addition to his firſt diſcovery *. He directed them to take off the cover of the Vidame of Chartres' letters, and dip it in water, by which means ſome latent writing would become viſible. Upon the trial being made, there appeared wrote in the hand of Dardres, who was the conſtable's ſecretary, and a vaſſal of the king of Navarre, the following article. "That Montmorency continued ſtill to be of opinion, that the Guiſes ſhould be taken off, which he was confident might be effected by a decree of the enſuing aſſembly of the ſtates, even though the king and queen mother oppoſed it to the utmoſt of their power, provided the princes preſented themſelves at the meeting, to animate the reſolution of their party. It was ſubjoined, that a great many looked upon this advice of the

And endeavours to find evidences for a criminal accuſation of them.

Sept. 25.

* Thuan. ibid.

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conſtable's to be more ſcrupulous than ſafe; and that it would be better to act a bolder part and aſſault the Guiſes, upon the firſt opportunity they found at court, and that it needed not be doubted that numbers would favour the deſign, and that the lords of Montmorency and their adherents, inſtead of being diſſatisfied, would at the proper criſis ſhew themſelves as intrepid as others, in giving it the finiſhing ſtroke." This was the moſt authentic evidence that was yet found of the criminal purpoſes of the princes, though it amounted not to a clear proof; and as the experiment upon the paper was not immediately tried, might even be ſuſpected to be a forgery. But it is not alledged that there was reaſon to view it in that light. Yet when the Vidame of Chartres was interrogated about the meaning of that part of his letter, in which he promiſed to ſtand by the prince of Condé; this far more material charge againſt him was not advanced *. The Vidame, after ſome weeks of ſtrict confinement in the Baſtile, upon his application to the college of knights of the order of St. Michael, obtained, with ſome difficulty, the favour of retiring under a guard to his own houſe, where chagrin or the effects of former exceſs ſoon put an end to his life.

The court had already diſpoſed of the chief governments, to ſuch of the nobility and officers of the crown as they believed to be well affected to their intereſt, and had divided among them the different companies of the Gens d'Armes, which could be ſpared from attendance upon the king, in the manner which ſeemed fitteſt to over-awe the Hugonots, and check the inſolent attempts of the oppoſite party. Upon the new informations of la Sague, and others who were compelled to declare what they knew or ima-

* Brantome.

gined,

1560.

The commiſſions of various military commanders are changed.

gined, with reſpect to the adherents of the Bourbon faction, precautions were taken to change or ſuperſede the commiſſions of thoſe they averred to be of that claſs, without giving them occaſion to perceive what was intended *. The duke d'Eſtampes being ſent for to court, was detained there with propoſals of being employed by the king in the government of Scotland: and Senarpont being declared lieutenant to the marſhal Briſſac, was prevented from ſetting out for his government in Picardy. But as the rumour of inſurrections increaſed, the court ſtudied more than any other point, how to engage the princes of Bourbon to quit their jealouſy and apprehenſions, and diſpoſe them to believe that they might with ſafety and honour preſent themſelves at the approaching aſſembly of the ſtates. For this purpoſe, the count de Cruſſol was diſpatched with a ſpecial meſſage from his majeſty to the king of Navarre, deſiring him to offer no excuſes or difficulties about attending the court, but immediately to prepare for it, and to bring the prince of Condé along with him, as he might depend upon the aſſurances he had formerly given, that he believed him innocent, and would therefore ſuffer no diſhonour or injury to be done to him; and that it might concern the prince of Condé's reputation to have the falſe accuſations of which he complained, refuted in the moſt public manner. The admiral Coligni and his brother the cardinal Chatillon, by offering their aſſiſtance to the queen mother in this matter, cheriſhed the hopes of the court party, that it might be brought about by means of thoſe moſt intimately connected with the princes of Bourbon. With permiſſion from the queen mother, they wrote upon the ſubject to their uterine ſiſter, the prince of Condé's mother-in-law, that ſhe might

And means uſed to perſuade the two princes to attend the aſſembly of the ſtates.

* D'Avila, ibid.

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uſe her influence, which reaſons of intereſt rendered conſiderable, in perſuading him to comply with the king's requeſt. But the anſwer from madam de Mailly was not very favourable; and the ſentiments ſhe expreſſed were repeated in a more pointed ſtyle, in a letter from her daughter the princeſs of Condé to queen Catharine, which ſignified, that the prince of Condé was always ready to obey the king's command, and when ordered would attend his majeſty: but ſince his enemies the Guiſes were veſted with ſuch unlimited authority at court, it ought not to be conſtructed inſolence if he came accompanied with a numerous retinue. Catharine, piqued at this language, made anſwer, that it became no perſon whatever to appear before the king with more than his ordinary attendants; but if the prince of Condé took upon him to come with an unuſual train, he would find his majeſty prepared to receive him with a ſuperior force. The Colignis, upon this, aſked leave of abſence, and departed from the court.

Their faction not the ſole cauſe of the public diſorders.

THE public diſorders and commotions which for ſome time paſt had prevailed in ſeveral towns and provinces, and grew every day more vexatious and formidable to the court, though generally imputed by the Guiſes to the ſecret practices of the princes of Bourbon and their partizans, had only a ſecondary and accidental relation to their cauſe and intereſt. Length of time, the multiplicity of proteſtant converts, and the origin of religious parties and quarrels, intermixed with ſecular intereſt, naturally tended to produce and mature a variety of popular diſſentions and conteſts. The proteſtants having grown up againſt the preſſure and utmoſt efforts of the civil power, and ſubſiſted in contradiction to the authority of ſtanding laws, were habitually led and accuſtomed to the tranſgreſſion of them. Having often ſolicited and never obtained the indulgence

indulgence of the government, they began to look upon that which was denied them, and yet in a certain way enjoyed, as a natural privilege, or providential gift; and perceiving their party turn powerful, they became more eager and hardy in their endeavours to throw off the reſtraints they laboured under, and to procure liberty of conſcience and the free exerciſe of their religion. Inſtances * of this licentiouſneſs appeared in the remoter provinces of Dauphiny and Provence. In the city of Valence, the proteſtant doctrines had been for a conſiderable time privately taught by different maſters of theology, with ſuch ſucceſs, that the greateſt part of the ſtudents of law, and many of the higheſt rank, eſpouſed them: the public ſchools in the night-time being made auditories for preaching. Encouraged by Quintel, who had been a captain in the army, and ſeveral of the nobleſſe, the young converts poſſeſſed themſelves by force of the church of the Franciſcans, and there openly reſorted to hear ſermons. As this happened about the time when, after the conſpiracy of Amboiſe, the edict which pardoned thoſe who returned to the catholic church was publiſhed at Valence, Buriac, the provincial attorney, who was ſecretly inclined to ſupport the proteſtant party, convened a meeting of the citizens, and after reading the edict, and extolling the king's lenity, aſked them, whether they would not take the benefit of his majeſty's pardon? Mirabel, one of the proteſtants, replied, That his fraternity never came to any determination of importance, without firſt praying to God. Buriac giving his permiſſion to this; one who had deacon's orders among them, upon a ſign from Mirabel, began prayers, after falling down upon his knees; in which motion, almoſt the whole company, as if ſtruck with a pannic, followed

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* D'Aubigne, chap. 20. Thuan. lib. xxv. p. 521.

him;

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him; only ſome eccleſiaſtics, who were preſent, kept their former poſture, and ſtood trembling all the while, and expoſed to the ſcorn of the multitude. When prayers were ended, the proteſtant diſciples made anſwer, that ſubmiſſion to the king was what they were always ready to ſhew; but, with regard to the pardon contained in the edict, they thought themſelves not concerned in it; that they never had conſpired againſt his majeſty, nor mutinied againſt his government; that being only deſirous to have liberty of conſcience, they had conſtituted ſome regular ſocieties for maintaining it, in which they offered prayers for the king's welfare; and that the arms they were provided with were intended for perſonal ſafety, and by no means to give offence or diſturbance to the public.

Which becomes more general in the kingdom by the preſumption of the Hugonots.

THE like diſorderly appearances aroſe in the towns of Montelimard and Romans, favoured by Charles du Puy Montbrun, Albert St. Alban, and other leading men; and in the laſt of theſe places they met publicly in the great church, wore arms, and threw the catholics into conſternation.

THE methods by which theſe encroachments of the proteſtants were oppoſed and puniſhed, often occaſioned much greater enormities. As many of the * magiſtrates and civil officers, either from partiality or negligence, were thought to be remiſs in checking the offenders, the Guiſes, in order to remedy this deficiency, took upon them to appoint ſome of their own creatures, or to ſend private orders to the moſt zealous catholics to revenge the affront offered to the church and ſtate. This raiſed private feuds; proved the ſource of many lawleſs enterprizes, and expoſed ſeveral towns to depredation and bloodſhed. In this manner the city of Valence

* Thuan. ibid.

was chaſtized. The lord de Maugeron, whom the Guiſes had pitched upon as well qualified for this ſervice, collected a number of deſperate fellows from Lions, and rowed them in boats down the Rhone to the city. Though he had an agent within, who had prepared things for favouring his aſſault, the proteſtant aſſociates were alarmed, and ſtood ready to defend themſelves. He judged it to be ſafeſt to enter into a parley with Mirabel and his party, and ſucceeded ſo well, by ſoothing them with fair ſpeeches, and even feigning a biaſs to the principles of oppoſition to the pope, that many of them, who came from the country, diſperſed, and the ſtudents retired to their houſes. De Maugeron, who watched this opportunity, immediately brought up his followers, and ſecured the gates of the town. A ſcene of ravage was then begun. Several priſoners were taken, others were ranſomed for money; and many townſmen treated as if they had been the prizes of war to an enemy. Seventeen companies of veterans, marching from Piedmont, were ordered to take the rout of Valence to ſupport Maugeron; who, with this reinforcement, found no difficulty of performing much the ſame feats in the towns of Romans and Montelimard. La Mothe Gondrin alſo had a commiſſion ſent him from the king to levy forces and diſarm Montburn; who, thinking himſelf obnoxious to the aſſaults of the catholics, on account of his religious principles, inſiſted on the privilege of aſſembling his friends and party for his defence and ſecurity. The nobility of the province complained of Gondrin's commiſſion as an innovation inconſiſtent with their rights and immunities. But theſe objections being ſoon removed, the buſineſs was undertaken by Gondrin; and, after various ſkirmiſhes and parleys, Montbrun was beat out of Dauphiny, and obliged to fly into Switzerland.

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An anabaptiſt demonſtrates his enthuſiaſm;

The fanatic madneſs of the ſect of the anabaptiſts, which ſhocked reaſon, and confounded all moral and religious principles, likewiſe diſcovered itſelf among ſome of the French diſciples of the reformed faith. Though inſtances of it were rare, and always deteſtable to the proteſtants, they failed not to be turned to the ſcandal and prejudice of their profeſſion *. In one of the towns of Normandy, where they ſometimes preſumed to preach publicly, and meet in the ſchools for inſtruction; one of thoſe infamous enthuſiaſts, baniſhed from Geneva, erected an auditory for himſelf, to which the novelty and boldneſs of his appearance, beſides a marvellous faculty he pretended to have, of ſpeaking three languages by a kind of inſtantaneous inſpiration, attracted great crouds of all ſorts of people, catholics as well as proteſtants. He told them that he had wonderful revelations communicated to him from God: that Antichriſt was to be forcibly caſt down from his throne, and that he being appointed by God to be leader to the army deſigned for the extirpation of the wicked of the earth, had orders to ſpare no ungodly princes nor magiſtrates; and that, as by ſpecial favour from on high, he was not to taſte death until he had founded a new world, free from ſin and corruption; they ought therefore to take up arms and range themſelves under his ſtandard; for want of which it was no wonder, he ſaid, that the inſurrection of Amboiſe had not proſpered. At every ſentence uttered, his motions were extatic. His mouth being diſtorted, and his eyes ſhut cloſe, he made many rotations with his head; and then, with his breaſt heaving, and his mouth foaming, he wreathed himſelf like a ſnake along the ground. This enthuſiaſtic tranſport appeared ludicrous to many, and with others it paſſed for the ſignature of inſpiration.

* Thuan. ibid. p. 526.

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As his impoſture began to work up ſome weak minds to ſedition, he was ſeized, and four days after condemned to be burnt alive. Two of his inſeparable companions, deluded with the belief of his being immortal, were alſo condemned, and the laſt ſight they beheld was that of their prophet conſumed to aſhes. The puniſhment of ſuch noted impoſtors pleaſed the catholics; as their inhuman fires, prepared for hereſy, ſeemed juſtifiable from it; and the proteſtants, though they approved not ſuch cruelty, were not diſſatisfied with the chaſtizement and removal of wretches, whoſe ignominious appearance expoſed their cauſe to reproach and contumely.

and is burnt alive.

THE various reports which were ſpread of the deſigns and attempts of the proteſtants, ſtruck the court with ſtronger apprehenſions. They were looked upon as incitements to the princes of Bourbon to meditate an open revolt; who, being buoyed up with new projects, it was feared would either not conſent to attend the aſſembly of the ſtates, or determine to come ſurrounded with ſuch bands of their friends and vaſſals as would render it extremely hazardous to attack them. Having, however, made the beſt diſpoſitions which circumſtances would admit for obviating all dangers, the court thought it proper to ſhew ſome authority, and publiſh ſuch acts as correſponded to their intentions. An ordinance was iſſued, which prohibited all princes of the blood, officers of ſtate, and perſons of all ranks, to levy troops or raiſe men, without ſpecial commiſſion from his majeſty, under the penalty of being treated as guilty of high treaſon. Public prayers and proceſſions were ordered for the ſafety of the king, the tranquillity of the government, and the auſpicious celebration of the national council which was expected. The aſſembly of the ſtates, appointed to be held at Meaux, was transferred to Orleans. That the king

The court begins to act with vigour.

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might not ſeem to want power to command what he deſired of the princes of Bourbon; the marſhal de Thermes was diſpatched into Poictou, with orders to draw together the troops diſtributed in the neighbouring provinces, and be in readineſs to march into Gaſcony. In the mean time *, Charles, cardinal of Bourbon, a man as incapable of diſcovering the artifice of others as he was a ſtranger to it in his own conduct, being eaſily impoſed on by the feigned language of the court, and the aſſurances given him by the queen mother of the king's friendly diſpoſitions to the king of Navarre and the prince of Condé his brother, ſet out with ſpeed to Bearn, to uſe all the perſuaſion he could to prevail with them to attend the king at the meeting of the ſtates.

October.

But fair promiſes are ſtill given to the brothers.

WHILE the court party thus adhered to their original plan, and employed both art and induſtry to reach the end propoſed by it, the princes of Bourbon perplext in their counſels, had come to no definitive reſolution †. Conferences were held and debates aroſe, about the conſequences of refuſing or obtemperating the demand of his majeſty. On the one ſide, it was ſaid that from the implacable enmity of the Guiſes to their family, and the prejudices they had long cheriſhed in the king's breaſt againſt their perſons, the very worſt treatment might be feared: that whatever late profeſſions of courteſy and friendſhip they had made, their actions ſtill teſtified, that they dreaded and watched them as their greateſt foes: that the accuſations againſt them might now be reduced to formal impeachments for treaſon; when they could produce, in evidence, the teſtimonies of ſeveral they had induſtriouſly ſeduced, or terrified into confeſſions: that, being always deſirous to accompliſh the

* D'Avila, ibid. † Thuan. lib. xxvi. p. 527.

diſgrace and ruin of the princes of the blood, they would not loſe the opportunity that now offered of ſacrificing the only two of that dignity, who proved a check to their boundleſs pride and ambition: that, in theſe circumſtances, inſtead of reſigning themſelves to the will and power of their inveterate enemies, it became them to attend to the ſafety of their lives, on which the hopes of their families, the honour of the blood royal, and the liberties of the kingdom were repoſed. On the other hand it was urged, that they could not refuſe complying with the king's command without bringing their allegiance to him under ſuſpicion, and confirming all that their enemies reported to their prejudice: that, beſides the ſecurity of the royal declarations, they had a protection from their blood, which being ever regarded by the moſt haughty kings, could not now be violated in the face of an aſſembly of the ſtates, by an irregular authority of the Guiſes, and an Italian princeſs: that the meeting of the ſtates general had been always ſolicited by them and their friends, for regulating the government, and ſettling the civil and religious diſſentions of the kingdom, and that to turn their backs upon it when called for theſe purpoſes, would be juſtly condemned as an unaccountable deſertion of the public intereſt and welfare, and afford their enemies the juſteſt pretenſion for excluding them altogether from a ſhare in the adminiſtration. The king of Navarre and the greateſt part of his counſellors were inclined to follow the latter opinion. But the chief difficulty was, with regard to the prince of Condé, who having already experienced the reſentment of the court, and conſcious he had gone greater lengths than his brother to provoke it, appeared reſolute in the purpoſe of abſenting himſelf. His ſpouſe and his mother-in-law daily beſet him with intreaties, not to expoſe his life, but to remain in a place of ſafety; and alledged that the king of Navare's

Who, after much irreſolution, determine to attend the ſtates general.

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inclination to venture his perſon furniſhed the ſtrongeſt argument for this reſolution, ſince his enemies would be intimidated from any attempt againſt him, when they knew that the prince of Condé lived in a capacity to revenge it. It was however the judgment of the generality, that the prince of Condé ought not to run the hazard of being condemned in abſence, and that however obnoxious he might be in caſe of a rigorous trial, the alleviations he had to plead, his intereſt with the deputies of the ſtates, and his pre-eminent quality would preponderate ſo as to procure him pardon and favour. The repreſentation which the cardinal of Bourbon † gave of the placid temper of the court, together with the arguments inſiſted upon by other meſſengers ſent from thence, concurred to determine the prince of Condé to drop his objections, and reſolve to accompany his brother.

Several diſcern the craft of the court.

It was by this time perceptible to the obſerving, that the court had ſome profound purpoſe in view; and that the aſſembly of the ſtates was the ſcene choſen to introduce it. The affectation of unuſual fear ſhewn there, and the public intimations given of apprehended danger, and the conſtant attendance of a large body of men upon the king, were preludes ſufficient to raiſe this ſuſpicion. Marillac, the archbiſhop of Vienne, judging from the face of things at court, and ſome informations he had, that ſome deſperate ſtroke was intended againſt the Bourbon princes, and the liberties of the kingdom, wrote to the dutcheſs of Montpenſier, to warn her huſband, who was a branch of that family, what an immediate call he and the other deſcendants of blood-royal, had to unite in proper meaſures for their defence, and to take particular care that the

† D'Aubigne, ibid. chap. xxi.

king

king of Navarre's children, and his brothers, were not left a prey to thoſe who inveigled their fathers to confinement or deſtruction. Theſe advices were communicated to the princes and ſome of their party without producing any effect; whilſt the concern of the biſhop for the ſituation of his friends, encreaſed his juſt apprehenſions, and threw him into a diſorder, of which he died in a ſhort time*. The old conſtable ſhewed that he underſtood the late excentric meaſures of the court to be inventions to ſhade ſome ſingular project of reſentment; and that the tendency of them might reaſonably be dreaded by him and his friends, even though they deſpiſed the danger of la Sague's diſcoveries. As he was ſent for by the king, he pretended not to excuſe himſelf or decline going; but ſetting out late, and ſlowly, he arrived not in Paris till the court was gone from thence †. There complaining of an attack of the catarrh and the gout, he returned for his recovery to his own houſe. He again began his journey, but was incommoded with the motion, which obliged him often to interrupt it, and for the ſake of convenient lodging, proceeded by various circuits upon his way. When his ſons perceiving this affected delay, urged him to haſten his pace, as he had nothing to fear from the court, he anſwered, "It was evident to him that thoſe about the king might have their deſire, and govern the ſtate according to their pleaſure; and yet, as if they wanted to create oppoſition to their own authority, they ſought an aſſembly of the ſtates, an inconſiſtency which could not have been thought of by them, without ſome hidden deſign that a little time would bring to light."

By the return of the count of Cruſſol and the cardinal of Bourbon, it was known at court, that the two princes were preparing to

A military force beyond what was uſual is ordered to attend the king at Orleans.

* D'Aubigne, ibid. † D'Avila, ibid.

Book II. 1560. to ſet out from Bearn. The king, who had left Fontainbleau, and come to St. Germains, immediately proceeded to Paris, where two old regiments of foot, arrived from Scotland and Piedmont, had been ordered to attend him. As the extraordinary armament of the court now ſtruck moſt people with ſurprize and apprehenſion, and it being no longer neceſſary to wear the maſk, the king ſignified to a meeting of the counſellors of parliament, that he had now perſpicuous evidence, that the conſpiracy of Amboiſe had been ſpirited up by the diſaffection and ambitious deſigns of the princes of Bourbon; and therefore he found himſelf obliged to provide in an unuſual manner, for the defence of his perſon and government. As the city of Orleans was already occupied with troops ſent hither under the command of de Cipierre, the deputies who came in from the diſtant provinces, were aſtoniſhed at obſerving the multitude of ſoldiers who lined the avenues of the town, and their amazement increaſed when they beheld Francis enter it upon the ſixteenth of October, invironed with files of guards and troops, as if he had been marching to the field againſt the enemy, inſtead of coming to open the aſſembly of the ſtates. Hitherto the kings of France, and indeed all the reſt of the European princes, kept up no other military array about their courts, but that of a ſlight body-guard, which in grand proceſſions, when they were attended by the nobles and officers of ſtate made no appearance different from the cavalcade. The two immediate predeceſſors of Francis, who often appeared at the head of the moſt numerous armies, laid aſide their martial pomp and equipage in the capital city, and retained no more of it there than what ſerved to furniſh out a tournament, or to add to the ſplendor of a public feſtivity. Henry was the firſt who ordered the marſhals of France, and the princes of the blood, to wear their ſwords when in his abſence they

October 16th.

attended

attended the parliament, a diſtinction which antient cuſtom had appropriated to the king himſelf. But it was evident that the Guiſes not only deſired to ſhew the power of the court; but to impreſs the publick with the belief of the perilous ſituation to which the king was reduced by the machinations of their adverſaries. Letters in his majeſty's name were ſent to the parliament of Paris, to warn the citizens to be on their guard againſt any ſudden inſurrection; and as if this intimation was enough to raiſe a panic, the marſhal Montmorency was appointed to ſearch ſuſpected houſes, and detect concealed delinquents. D'Andelot ‡, who as colonel of the French infantry, had joined the train of the court, diſcovered upon this as well as other conjunctures, the remarkable genius he had to foreſee and elude the criſis of danger, whilſt he ventured without fear or ſcruple, through the antecedent ſtages of it. Apprehending the tendency of the meaſures taken by the court, he pretended to be affronted by the diſobedience of ſome of the military corps to his orders, and getting ſecretly into a ſkiff upon the Loire, he directed his courſe to the coaſt of Britany, from whence he might eaſily paſs over to England. The Guiſes intended to have arreſted him, but were afraid to offer ſuch violence before the arrival of the princes. The admiral his brother, was under no ſuch ſolicitude about his ſafety. His character of loyalty unſullied, his conduct magnanimous and uniform, he had, without entangling himſelf in raſh cabals and intrigues, openly blamed and oppoſed on proper occaſions, the arbitrary procedure of the Guiſes, and at the ſame time preſerved that reputation of honour and fidelity at court, which gave him a certain protection there, when danger viſibly threatened his friends and party.

‡ D'Avila, ibid. Thuan. ibid.

THE

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The two princes, tho' warned of the designs upon them, proceed to Orleans.

THE king of Navarre, and the prince of Condé, leaving their children behind them at Pau in Bearn, had now set out upon their way to Orleans. They had not advanced far beyond the confines of their own small territories, till the diffidence which they had all along felt, was augmented by the various reports they heard about the intentions of the court *. Theodore Beza, who had been sent for by the princes to Nerac, and intended to have accompanied them in order to get the edict of Fontainbleau in favour of the protestants put in execution, found it advisеable to retire. But all the intelligence they had, tended only to perplex them, when now it was too late to think of altering their purpose. The bold resolution to refuse the king's orders being laid aside, the other scheme, something similar to it, of appearing at the head of their friends and vassals, was also, from parity of reason, given up. The insidious advice of the cardinal of Armagnac, given under shew of friendship, is said to have prevailed with them to dismiss a numerous body of nobles and gentry who joined their retinue; and to excuse others who prepared to attend them †. It appears however at this time, that there was little occasion for the court to use stratagems. Part of the troops commanded by the marshal de Thermes had already got behind them. Though not only this signal of compulsion, but the shutting of the gates of Poicters against them, under pretence of the king's orders, excited further suspence, and even such indignation, that they turned out of the road, and began to enter into new consultations; they were soon convinced that they had no other choice left them but to proceed forward. Whatever the hazard might be, it seemed more honourable to encounter it than to betake themselves to flight;

* Castelnau, ibid. p. 50. † D'Aubigne, ibid. Matthieu, ibid.

and

and more eligible in their circumſtances, which were not ſuited by any preparations for open hoſtilities with the court. Thus gradually overcoming the dictates of fear, and recollecting the aſſurances of perſonal ſecurity, ſo often expreſſed in letters and meſſages from the king, they again bent their courſe to Poictiers, and were met upon the way by the marſhal de Thermes, who made an apology for the behaviour of the commandant of the town, and endeavoured, by many marks of reſpect and honour, to perſuade them to look upon it as an undeſigned accident. Upon their departure from Poictiers, they were eſcorted by the marſhal, whilſt large parties of his troops followed them at ſome diſtance, till they drew near to Orleans, where they arrived in the end of October.

October 29th.

In this manner at length the court party effectuated their grand aim of obliging the princes of Bourbon, unattended by their adherents, and ſeparated from the aid and influence of their friends, to ſubmit their perſons and conduct to ſuch cognizance and judgment as they thought fit to ordain for them. Their ſcheme may indeed be regarded as a maſter-piece of art, both in its deſign and execution. To allow the prince of Condé freedom to withdraw, when it appeared unſeaſonable to produce their charge againſt him, and to aſſume the appearance of more moderate government, by ſummoning a convention of the notables, and calling an aſſembly of the ſtates, with a view to oblige him and his brother, from the ties of honour and allegiance, to make their appearance, when the court was armed with power, and aſſiſted with the higheſt authority of the ſtate. To chalk out this political line, and manage incidents ſo as to correſpond with it, we muſt acknowledge were in-

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ſtances of addreſs and refinement, that furniſh out upon the whole a ſurprizing picture. But the ſentiment of applauſe does not ariſe to enforce our admiration of this egregious policy. Upon a cool ſurvey the conduct of the court appears a ſtrained compoſition of diſingenuity and falſehood; in which truth and honour are ſacrificed for the ſake of the end purſued. In this ſeries of artifice we ſee the dignity of the royal name, even that of public edicts and aſſemblies, proſtituted to the purpoſes of craft. Scarcely does the conſideration of the moſt urgent neceſſities of the ſtate reconcile us to the violation of faith and honeſty; but it ſhocks the human ſenſe of honour, to behold the infringement of thoſe bonds adopted, as the only ſure hinge of government, and the political ſyſtem ſuſtained on the ruin of principles eſſential to its exiſtence.

Being arrived there, the prince of Condé is ſeized and impriſoned.

THE two princes were uſhered into Orleans in a manner which ſhewed they were not looked upon as friends. The cuſtomary honours paid to thoſe of the blood royal, were interrupted. The ſmall train which came from the city to wait on them, bore no welcome or gracious meſſage from the court *. When they proceeded to the king's apartment, with an intention to enter the court yard on horſeback, as the princes of the blood were allowed to do; they found the great gate ſhut, and they were obliged to alight in the ſtreet, and paſs on foot by the wicket. With few other attendants beſides the officers of the guards, and others in waiting, they were conducted to the king's preſence, who, hardly vouchſafing them a cold ſalutation, whilſt the Guiſes affected the ſame air of diſdain, ſtept towards the queen mother's chamber, whither they were deſired to follow. Upon their entrance Catha-

* Matthieu, ibid.

rine

rine inſtantly diſcovered many outward ſymptoms of mixed emotion; concern and congratulation appearing to ſtrive together in her countenance; and as if ſhe had deeply felt the impreſſions correſponding to thoſe affections, when the king began to expoſtulate with the princes, ſhe burſt into tears. But the wonderful power ſhe had of aſſuming at pleaſure the manner and tone of all the different paſſions, rendered it eaſy for her to act ſuch a part *. Francis upbraided the prince of Condé with want of honour, and diſloyalty, and endeavouring to ſtir up his ſubjects to rebellion. The prince replied, that in ſpite of thoſe calumnious aſperſions of his enemies, he could vindicate his innocence before the world. "It is neceſſary then, ſaid the king, to proceed in the courſe of juſtice;" and immediately gave orders to two captains of his guard, to ſeize his perſon, and take him into cuſtody. He was carried to an adjacent houſe prepared for the purpoſe; its windows being ſecured with iron bars, the gates walled up or doubled, and the corners ſecured by two brick baſtions, on which ſome ſmall pieces of cannon were mounted. The prince, when led away, complained aloud, that the word of the king, plighted for his ſafety, was violated; and that the credulity of the cardinal of Bourbon his brother, who had induced him to truſt this faithleſs engagement, would now work the ruin of their family. The king of Navarre appeared thunder-ſtruck with aſtoniſhment and confuſion, on beholding his brother thus hurried away to priſon †. His remonſtrances againſt it, and his offer to become ſurety for his appearance to a trial, were equally rejected. All the ſatisfaction he obtained, conſiſted of ſome ſoothing ſpeeches from queen Catharine,

* D'Aubigne, ibid. Thuan. ibid.

† Matthieu, p. 228.

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CHAP.

CHAP. III.

Origin and conſtitution of the ſtates-general of France—The prince of Condé's proceſs—Sentence of death pronounced upon him—The king ſeized with a dangerous illneſs—Perplexity of the queen-mother—Death of Francis II.*—Eſtimate of the character and miniſtry of the Guiſes in his reign.*

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The origin and conſtitution of the ſtates-general of France.

THE ſtates-general being now met at Orleans, it will be neceſſary to review the origin, and explain the conſtitution of thoſe antient aſſemblies. In the introductory part of this hiſtory we have obſerved, that the rendezvous of the Franks in their camp, or field of march, formed the original parliaments, or general aſſemblies of the nation. From the more regular and ſtated conventions of them by Charlemaigne, they attained the form and conſtitution of a ſupreme legiſlative body *. In the reigns of ſeveral of his immediate ſucceſſors, they ſtill continued to be called, and interpoſed their deciſions or capitularies, to adjuſt the diſſentions, and eſtabliſh the civil and political order of the kingdom, until the principles of the feudal government, which had only a beginning in the time of Charlemagne, extended their influence, and brought the dignity of the crown and the monarchy, to the brink of annihilation. Then the parliaments ceaſed altogether to be national aſſemblies. The independent rights of the fiefs created a diſunion, and in many reſpects, an oppoſition of the different members of the monarchy to each other, which was inconſiſtent with them §. From Hugh Capet's acceſſion, and for a courſe of

* Paſquier, liv. ii. chap. 2.

§ Boulainvilliers ſur les Parlem. lett iii. L'Abbé de Mably, tom. ii. p. 288.

various

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various reigns after that period, what are named parliaments, were in reality no more than congreſſes held among parties of the feudal lords, who had differences to accommodate, or ſome propoſals for their common ſafety and intereſt to make, which required a parley or diſcuſſion. Such were many parliaments held about the *Croiſades*, which the biſhops and monks convened; and others, where the lords in different provinces, met by conſent, to defend their juriſdictions againſt the invaſions of the clergy. When the kings interpoſed the authority of their name for ſummoning general aſſemblies of the grandees and barons of the kingdom, it made no alteration in the nature of thoſe conventions. Not even the immediate vaſſals of the crown, who owed fealty and homage to the king, counted themſelves obliged to give attendance in thoſe parliaments, which were only voluntary aſſociations, and no part of the feudal policy. The agreements or determinations formed in them, were ſo far from being the acts or laws of a public body, that they bound only ſuch a number of thoſe preſent, as concurred in them, and affixed their ſignatures to the ſcrolls of the tranſactions. We find Philip the auguſt, in the title to what is called the *Ordinance* of Villeneuve le Roy, mentioned by Boulainvilliers*, aſſociating to his royal authority the lords, who paſſed it in conjunction with him. The ſtyle is, *Philip by the grace of God, king of France, Eudes duke of Burgundy, Hervé count of Nevers, and ſeveral others, who have unanimouſly agreed*, &c. The ſame prince, inſtead of an arret in the parliament of Melun, delivers to the counteſs of Champagne ſeveral written inſtruments, copied from each other, and ſealed by himſelf and the other lords. Such were the parliaments of the times when the feudal ſyſtem preſerved its ſtubborn power.

* Ibid. let. v. L'Abbe de Mably, ibid. p. 355.

In none of them was a general or public authority owned, and from them hardly could any idea of their antient national aſſemblies be revived among the French. In the reign of St. Lewis, we begin to find ſome ſlight intimations given in the decrees publiſhed of his ſovereign power, to compel the refractory lords to accept or obey them. By the frequency of appeals to the courts of his domains, and other relaxations of the feudal principles and maxims, which then took place, ſome impreſſions of a legiſlative authority would gradually be communicated. The regular and fixed aſſizes of the king's feudal court, or that of the peers, which were occaſionally turned into general parliaments, for the ſake of levying pecuniary aids and other purpoſes, alſo contributed to recover the nation out of its disjointed ſtate, and accuſtom the jarring members of the monarchy, to combine in the ſame public counſels and meaſures. At length, when under Philip-le-bel, the royalty had acquired ſeveral additional ſupports, a bolder effort was made by that monarch, to reconcile, or rather ſubject the feudal to the political ſyſtem, by convening, as from his ſovereign authority, an aſſembly of the three orders of the kingdom; which afterwards obtained the name of the ſtates-general.

THIS remarkable convocation of the firſt ſtates-general of France was held in the cathedral church of Paris †, in March, 1301. Philip's letters patent, addreſſed to the three orders, which would have been a curioſity, are not preſerved. The chronicle of St. Denis, and the continuator of Nangis, are the chief authorities for the form and import of their deliberations. To make the tranſition from the parliaments of the feudal lords, to a general con-

† Boulainvilliers, ibid. let. vii. Henault. Abbregé chron. p. 181.

vention

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vention of the nobility, clergy and commons, was a novelty, of which, perhaps, the idea had not occurred to any of the predeceſſors of Philip-le-bel. If it had proceeded from St. Lewis, the great deſign, worthy of his character, might have been aſcribed to nobler and more generous views of public and national policy, than hiſtory allows to be attributed to Philip-le-bel. That prince's perplext ſituation, into which his reſtleſs ambition, his avidity of wealth, and his artificial genius had thrown him, appears to have prompted him to form this new and extraordinary project. He had more ſucceſs in it, than there was ground to expect, from the firſt experiment, of ſuch an aſſembly. Even the introduction of the deputies of the principal cities into it, and the aſſociation of the commons with the clergy and nobles, in the deliberations, paſſed without oppoſition or diſguſt. Since before this period there was no example or precedent of the commons appearing in the general parliaments, it might have created a quarrel. Some hiſtorians have alledged, indeed, that St. Lewis, towards the end of his reign, had brought up to them ſome of the bailiffs or popular officers from the towns, that they might conſent to bear a ſhare of the ſubſidies that were wanted. In the ſpeech made by Philip's chancellor, this conſideration is aſſigned as the reaſon for ſummoning the third eſtate. The commons now holding their goods and effects in property, it was not ſuppoſed they could be taxed in an arbitrary manner, or without their voluntary concurrence. By this honourable uſage of them, the king, without doubt, conceived that they would be more readily engaged to contribute to the exigencies of the ſtate, and the lords and the clergy would be contented to find the common people required to relieve them of a part of the public burdens. In this manner the admiſſion of the repreſentatives

of

of the citizens into the ſtates-general, was coeval with the origin thoſe aſſemblies in France.

IN ſubſequent convocations of the ſtates, it appears, that Philip-le-bel *, and ſome of his ſucceſſors, followed a courſe proper to prevent them from aſſuming a determined form, or regular eſtabliſhment. They held ſometimes provincial conventions of them, and authorized their commiſſioners to aſſemble the ſeveral orders, either in the ſame place, or to meet with them ſeparately from each other. By this means the notions of their political authority and privilege would be rendered vague, and their dignity and rank in the government hardly perceptible to the ſtates themſelves. Thus weakened in their original, they advanced only ſome abrupt claims to ſhare the ſovereign power, without inſiſting ſteadily on ſpecial recognitions of the privileges belonging to them, as a conſtitutional body, who repreſented the ſeveral claſſes of the nation. But the exigencies of the kingdom from domeſtic broils, ſtill perpetuated the exiſtence and authority of the ſtates. The kings found them the only reſource they had, for overcoming the dangerous remains of the feudal anarchy. Without their intervention and concurrence, they could neither provide the ſinews of war, nor eſtabliſh general regulations in time of peace. They gave ſanction and force to the royal ordinances, with reſpect to the coin, the tailles, and the ſubſiſtance of the militia; and were † indeed not ſo much from expreſs conceſſions of the kings, as from the cuſtomary exerciſe of that authority, acknowledged to have the ſole power of appointing and regulating all general taxes and impoſts. In king John's reign ſome commiſſioners of the ſtates

* Ibid. lett. viii. † Ibid. lett. x. Paſquier, liv. ii. chap. 7.

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were impowered to levy the aids granted by them. During a long courſe of time, many difficult points of government, and various articles of the reformation of it, were ſubmitted to their judgment and determination. Though the later kings of the Valois family endeavoured to ſubſtitute in their place conventions of the Notables and other partial meetings of the grandees, and even affected to make the regiſtration of their ordinances by the parliament of Paris, ſerve inſtead of the ratification of the ſtates; yet the urgent neceſſities and dangers of the kingdom, ſtill obliged them to apply to thoſe aſſemblies, in order to corroborate the acts of their ſovereignty, and give the wonted conſtitutional form and vigour to the public laws, as well as to procure the grants of money and ſubſidies, which the government required.

THE manner in which the ſtates-general were called together, appears from the letters patent of Philip-le-long, to have been early fixed. The different ſituations of the monarchy no doubt would occaſion ſeveral variations in that, as well as in the form of their deliberations. But in time the following eſtabliſhment took place in the election of the deputies *. The whole kingdom being divided into forty Senechalies or Bailiwicks; in each of them a chief city was fixed upon, for the aſſembling of the three orders. Being met there, in conſequence of a ſummons from the king to hold the ſtates, the ſeveral communities ſeparated into different chambers, and choſe three delegates from each of their bodies, who were ſent to repreſent the clergy, the nobles, and the citizens †. In their firſt convocation by Philip-le-bel, the deputies of the third eſtate, little uſed to make ſpeeches, or to enter into formal deliberations, explained themſelves by a petition to the

* D'Avila, ibid. Thuan. lib. 27. p. 552. † Boulainvilliers, let. vii.

king;

king; whence the cuſtom of giving their vote, under the name of a requeſt, and of preſenting it kneeling before his majeſty, was afterwards continued. The ſpeakers of the two firſt orders alſo appear to have pronounced the firſt ſentence of their harrangues on their knees; after which, by the king's order, they roſe up, and the deputies who ſtood before them took their ſeats, and were covered. But the orator of the commons was allowed to remain kneeling, during the whole time he ſpoke. They deliberated ſeparately, and the conſent of two of the orders did not bind the third; ſo that nothing was concluded without their unanimous agreement. The great officers of the crown, and thoſe of the houſehold, attended the king when the ſtates were convened; and might propoſe in his majeſty's name whatever was proper for his ſervice, or of uſe to direct the reſolutions of the deputies †; but though they had on ſome occaſions, attempted to intrude into the debates, they were excluded from all ſuffrage, and from ſitting amongſt the delegates. Such was the eſtabliſhment of the ſtates-general of France, the aſſembly of which we have obſerved, had been ſo conſtantly demanded by the party in oppoſition to the Guiſes from the beginning of Francis's reign. They continued to be held on many important occaſions, till the reign of Lewis xiii; when their aſſembly, in the year 1615, proved the epoch of their expiration; after which conventions of the Notables, and the king's beds of juſtice in the parliament of Paris, were found ſufficient to uphold the firmer conſtitution of the monarchical power, and the general ſyſtem of the government of France.

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BESIDES the formalities cuſtomary at the opening of the ſtates, they began with that of making the deputies at Orleans ſwear to a November.

* Ibid. lett. x.

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The deputies are obliged to ſwear to the catholic faith;

ſummary of the articles of the catholic faith, compiled by the doctors of the Sorbonne eighteen years before, and publiſhed by the authority of the parliament. If any refuſed to give this public teſtimony of adherence to catholic principles, they were not only excluded from the aſſembly, but puniſhable by confiſcation of goods and corporal ſufferings. The cardinal of Tournon *, lately come from Rome, was the principal promoter of this violent meaſure, which ſharpened men's minds upon the ſubject of religion, and revived their indignation againſt heretics, and thoſe who favoured them. When this act was ratified, the high chancellor, in preſence of the king, made ſome propoſals to the ſtates, relating to the reformation of the government. The deputies of the three orders then retired into their ſeveral chambers, in order to deliberate upon them, and to report their opinions to the aſſembly †. But all this paſſed as matter of mere ceremony, which appeared little intereſting. The procedure, with reſpect to the prince of Condé, had drawn all mens attention; and the iſſue of it was expected with the utmoſt impatience. Every day furniſhed occaſion of ſpeculation, on account of the arreſtment of ſeveral perſons, and the diſcoveries that might be ſuppoſed to enſue from it ‡. Bouchard, the king of Navarre's chancellor, who had already ſent to the court ſome private informations againſt the prince of Condé; and, to avoid all ſuſpicion of being concerned with him, had retired to St. Jean d'Angely, was ſeized there, and conducted under a cloſe guard to Orleans. Condé's mother-in-law, whoſe ſpirited invectives againſt the Guiſes had given offence, was taken priſoner at her houſe in Picardy, and confined to the caſtle of St. Germain en Laye. To begin the example of capital trials, Groſlot, the bailiff of Orleans,

and ſeveral of the prince of Condé's adherents taken into cuſtody.

* Thuan. ibid. † D'Avila, ibid. ‡ D'Aubigne, ibid.

was

was impeached on a former accuſation of negligence in reſtraining the meetings of heretics, of which the parliament had abſolved him. But the ſuſpicion of his having kept a correſpondence with the prince of Condé, and endeavoured to bring the city to his intereſt, was the real ground of the charge being re-exhibited againſt him.

His proceſs is ordered;

THE order for the confinement and trial of the prince was ſigned by the king, and for the greater ſolemnity, or in imitation of what was done in the more antient feudal times, the ſubſcriptions of ſome of the peers and nobles were annexed to it; the marſhal Briſſac being the firſt of them who prefixed his name*. The chancellor ſhewed ſome reluctance to do it; whilſt the Guiſes, that they might not be accuſed of malevolence and enmity to the pannel, declined interfering openly in the affair. This was not merely the dictate of policy, but aroſe from a cuſtom founded on a ſentiment of honour, and generally followed in that age, when few of the exacter forms of juſtice were obſerved, by which any party, whoſe oppoſition and hatred to another were publicly known, was obliged to deſiſt from the privilege of judgment, in the cauſe of his adverſary. Except that the ſtates were met, and witneſſed it, the proceſs againſt Condé was carried on with little more form or ceremony than what was uſual in trials of perſons in the rank of nobleſſe†. His judges conſiſted only of three delegates of the parliament; Chriſtopher de Thou, the preſident de Faye, and Jacques Viole, who were nominated by the king. The attorney Bourdin produced the charge againſt him; du Tillet wrote the proceſs, and the chancellor attended during the examination of the witneſſes.

* Thuan. ibid. † D'Avila, ibid. Matthieu, ibid.

When

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When they went in, their judicial capacity, to interrogate the prince of Condé in the place of his confinement, upon the articles of his accuſation, he refuſed to ſubmit his cauſe to their cognizance, and alledged, that he could be legally impannelled before no other judicature but that of the court of parliament; when all the chambers were aſſembled together, the peers ſummoned, and the king himſelf preſided in his bed of juſtice *. It is certain, that ſuch a claim might, in conformity to the antient conſtitutions of the ſtate, be juſtly inſiſted upon by every peer of France, and with equal propriety by a prince of the blood, though he were not veſted with a peerage, which was the caſe of the prince of Condé. It had been † declared by the parliament to Charles VIII. that the trial of the perſonal cauſes of peers appertained to his majeſty and the other peers. Though the equal privilege of princes of the blood was not then aſçertained, it was underſtood and allowed afterwards to be their juſt and legitimate right, to be judged by a court compoſed of their equals, and in which the head and protector of their dignity preſided. Even in points which only touched their honour, they could demand acceſs to the king's council, and require a vindication of it before his majeſty. But in the capital trial of the prince of Condé, the judgment of his life and of his honour was, in an arbitrary manner, conſigned to three counſellors of parliament. In vain did he offer repeated proteſtations againſt the illegal procedure, and petition the king for redreſs. The cabinet council pronounced his objections invalid and frivolous, and, at the demand of Bourdin the proſecutor, declared that his refuſal to acquieſce in the authority of the court ſhould be conſtructed a confeſſion of guilt. In this critical ſituation, he was obliged to yield

and carried on in an arbitrary manner;

* Caſtelnau, liv. ii. p. 56.

† Boulainvil. let. 12.

to neceſſity, and allow an application to be made to the king to aſſign him council, to prepare and manage his defence. Two advocates of Paris, Peter Robert and Francis de Marillac, were accordingly appointed for that purpoſe. The judges then proceeded to examine a number of witneſſes that were brought from Amboiſe, Lions, and other places, to prove the charge againſt him. It appears that they met in the place where he was impriſoned, but only part of the evidence was taken in the face of the court, and in preſence of the pannel. His requeſt to have liberty to converſe before ear-witneſſes with the king of Navarre, and his brother the cardinal of Bourbon, that he might be aſſiſted by them in framing his exculpation, was denied; and he was only permitted to correſpond with them, and the princeſs his ſpouſe, by letters. In * general, the whole form and circumſtances of the trial were looked upon as arbitrary and inequitable towards a perſon of high birth. They ſought not proofs but witneſſes, ſays Matthieu; and accuſers, whoſe lives were ſpared to impeach him. All the informations about the ſurpriſe of Lions were ſecret; but the charge of guilt was reckoned to be fully proved before the court; and, at laſt, the judges being ordered to pronounce ſentence; the prince of Condé was condemned to have his head ſtruck off on a ſcaffold before the king's apartment.

and ſentence pronounced for his being beheaded.

THE Guiſes had reaſon to be elevated with thus vanquiſhing, by a regular proceſs, their principal adverſary, and reaching his life as a forfeiture to public juſtice. To reduce the king of Navarre to the ſame ſtate of perdition, was the utmoſt wiſh that their licentious ambition could ſuggeſt. But what de Thou relates upon the autho-

* Mem. de Caſtel. liv. ii. p. 55. Ibid. liv. vii. p. 613. Matth. ibid. p. 229. Thuan. ibid. p. 529.

rity

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rity of common fame, about their groſs ſcheme, or purpoſe of aſſaſſinating that prince, in the preſence of the king, and in concert with him, hath many marks of a fictitious and improbable tale. The Guiſes might, indeed, believe their ſcheme of demoliſhing the houſe of Bourbon, to be only half finiſhed, while Navarre enjoyed his life and liberty; but they muſt now have ſeen more than ever the advantage of proceeding in a different courſe from that of impetuoſity and violence. The reſerve they ſhewed when the prince of Condé was arreſted, and the appearance of which they preſerved, during the time of his trial, proves that they could preſcribe bounds to their ambition, and purſue their aim, without ſuch exceſs of rage. The king of Navarre was, by no means, ſo irreconcileable an antagoniſt as his brother, and the reſentment and oppoſition to be apprehended from him might be fully obviated, by a leſs atrocious meaſure than that of maſſacring him, which would infallibly be productive of infamy, and kindle the public indignation againſt them.

Desirous as the Guiſes were of haſtening the prince of Condé's doom, they acquieſced in the delay of it for ſome days, that the conſtable, whom they daily expected to arrive, and wiſhed to have in their power, might not be deterred by ſuch frightful intelligence from approaching the court. The queen mother likewiſe had occaſion for a little time to wind up the entangled line of her policy, to adapt her features and language to the different parties, and to beſprinkle, with the effuſion of her condolance, the friends of the condemned prince. She perceived that ſhe had to do ſomething more material and intereſting, for keeping the balance of power in an equal poize, which the ſuppreſſion of the princes of Bourbon would turn totally in the Guiſes favour. The dutcheſs of Mont-

Montpenſier ſet forth thoſe conſiderations reſpecting the maintainance of her authority, which, in the preſent ſituation of things, made a more forcible impreſſion. The more ſhe reflected on the conſequence of the prince of Condé's death, and the unrivalled ſway to which the Guiſes would riſe, by the overthrow of their opponents; the apprehenſions of the annihilation of her own authority affected her in a higher degree. At the ſame time the fertile reſources of her art and invention hardly ſuggeſted any proper meaſure, or certain reſolution to prevent the obvious danger.

The condemnation and capital puniſhment of the prince of Condé, upon his being judicially convicted as a conſpirator againſt the royal authority, and guilty of treaſon, will be conſidered by thoſe who are ready to decide, by the common maxims of caſuiſtry, the moſt doubtful caſes, to be a meaſure conſonant to the firſt principles of regular government; and in regard both to the fundamental laws and to the ſafety of the ſtate, equally neceſſary and juſtifiable. Others uſed to allow the lights of hiſtory to guide their judgment, will be more reſerved and ſcrupulous in their determination. They will reflect on the ſingular ſtate of the government, the prevalence of faction, and the political deſign carried on under the maſk of the ſovereign authority, before they pronounce the arreſtment of the prince of Condé, and the ſentence of death paſſed upon him, to be regular acts of juſtice. The treacherous procedure of the court againſt him, when he relied on the king's aſſurances for his perſonal ſafety, and put himſelf in the power of his adverſaries, will be diſapproved and condemned. Even upon the ſuppoſition of his having incurred the higheſt penalties of the law, or that the adminiſtration, as it then ſtood, needed to be ſecured againſt his dangerous enterprizes, by ſuch a capital impeachment,

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they will ſtill perceive the form and courſe of juſtice violated in his trial, and himſelf aſſaulted and ſtruck down by the arm of factious power, rather than reduced, by ſome raſh counſels he followed, to the condition of a criminal, under the ſentence of a legal condemnation. In this laſt opinion the beſt French hiſtorians agree. They * obſerve, that on account of the diſtinguiſhed regard paid at all times to the princes of the blood, the diſgrace or puniſhment of any of them was generally diſguſtful to the nation; and unleſs in very flagrant caſes, the ableſt and moſt reſolute monarchs of France had always appeared averſe to treat them with rigour and ſeverity. D'Avila owns, that except the Guiſes, there were few or none of the French nation ſo unconcerned for the princes of Bourbon, as not to remember the reſpect and deference due to their quality, rather than the demerit of their crime. "I will rather die, ſaid the count of Sancerre, than fix the ſtain upon my memory of having ſigned the death of a prince who may be my king." To find it affirmed by ſeveral hiſtorians, that the decree or warrant for the † execution of the prince of Condé was ſigned by the greateſt part of the officers of ſtate, and of the counſellors of law, who were preſent; the chancellor, the count de Sancerre, and the preſident Guillard, being the only perſons among them who declined, may appear to be inconſiſtent with this alledged concurrence of all ranks of people, in favouring the cauſe of the princes. But ſuppoſing that this actually happened, we ought to reflect that the court party, and thoſe aſſociated ‡ with the Guiſes, were now ſurrounded with ſuch power, as to be able to command whatever they pleaſed. The vigour and reſolution that might otherwiſe have appeared among the nobility, at the time of the meeting of the

* Addit. aux Caſtelnau, liv. vii. † De Serres.

‡ Brantome de Guiſe. Matthieu, ibid.

ſtates

ſtates general, were repreſſed; and timidity and dread aroſe in their room. The Guiſes, who had hitherto affected to let the law have its courſe, would be ſenſible that this was a point in which they might openly concern themſelves; and that the effectuating it would prove of ſingular uſe to vindicate them from the aſperſion of being the ſole authors of this odious meaſure, and inſtigating the king to execute a ſentence, from which his own natural diſpoſition, as well as a reſpect to the blood royal, would have reſtrained him. Accordingly, de Thou informs us, that the peers and counſellors were called in ſingly, and each of them was particularly ſolicited by the king to ſign the arret. Yet, after all, this ſame hiſtorian declares † it to be his opinion, that the decree was only drawn up in writing, and made ready for ſubſcriptions, but that none were annexed to it. This account of the matter, he adds, was given by his father, the preſident de Thou; as he was one of the delegated judges, he could hardly be miſtaken for want of knowledge of the fact; though we may ſuppoſe, that from the length of time, he had not retained an exact remembrance of it.

The ſeventeenth of November being fixed for the execution of the bailiff of Orleans, that of the prince of Condé was to follow it, at the interval of a few days. The king, who was naturally unfit for any ſcene of horror, and deſired to let this introductory act paſs in his abſence, was preparing to go out a hunting; when, all at once, he was ſeized with a violent diſorder in his head, which threw him into an epilepſy, that laſted for ſome minutes. Being recovered from his fit, he appeared for ſome days to have no further ſymptoms of danger, and the firſt attack was conſidered as a tran-

Nov. 17.

The king falls dangerouſly ill before the time of Condé's execution,

† Thuan. ibid. p. 531.

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ſient indiſpoſition. A fiſtulous ulcer ſoon ſhewed itſelf in his ear; but, as it was attended with ſuppuration, and the phyſicians choſe not to be haſty in declaring their judgment, he was thought to have attained, by this natural diſcharge, the cure of his diſtemper. But his ſpirits and ſtrength being ſenſibly waſted, the phyſicians ventured to expreſs their apprehenſions about his life. The Guiſes were confounded with this unexpected fatality, which threatened the abortion of their deſigns, when they were upon the point of being accompliſhed. Senſible, that the moment the king expired their authority would be bereft of its only baſis, they began to ſoften their dictatorial ſtyle, and ſuggeſt prudential arguments to engage the queen mother to perſevere in the ſame counſels, and for their mutual ſafety, immediately to bring the prince of Condé to his appointed doom. They repreſented to her *, that if he was allowed to ſurvive, there was nothing ſo deſperate, which they, who had puſhed him to the brink of ruin, had not reaſon to dread, from one of his fiery diſpoſition. They alledged that, in the preſent alarming turn of affairs, it was alſo requiſite to ſhut up the king of Navarre in priſon, and to conſult about the ſafeſt courſe of diſpoſing of him. They made an offer to ſtand by her in all events, and to maintain her claim to the chief authority in the ſtate, againſt all oppoſition. In this extremity, it is not improbable, as de Thou narrates it, that they might propoſe to arraign and condemn the king of Navarre along with his brother; and, as they are ſaid by d'Avila to have expreſſed themſelves, to cut off at two blows the heads of hereſy and rebellion.

which the Guiſes endeavour to haſten,

but the queen mother in perplexity,

QUEEN Catharine was thrown into great concern and deeper ſuſpenſe by this dark face of affairs. Impreſſed with the arguments

* Matthieu, ibid

of the Guiſes, and allured with their promiſes, ſhe feared, at the ſame time, that her compliance with them would hurry her into greater jeopardy. To owe her advancement to the firſt place in the government entirely to their intereſt, and after deſtroying their rivals, to truſt their future ſubmiſſion to her will and authority, appeared no leſs dangerous, than to encounter the reſentment of the princes of Bourbon. Inveloped in real perturbation, ſhe ſat venting her grief amongſt her female attendants, but could not remove the cloud of uncertainty from her mind, until her counſellor, de l'Hoſpital was called to aſſiſt her with his advice. The ability of plain reaſon to decide where the various efforts of a ſubtle genius were foiled, was evinced upon this occaſion *. He intimated to her, that ſhe had yet no occaſion to conſider herſelf reduced to the neceſſity of following the headlong and turbulent meaſures of faction, and much leſs of purchaſing the aſſiſtance of one party, by ſhedding the blood of another; that the Guiſes, in propoſing to impriſon the king of Navarre, ſhewed a palpable animoſity, more conſiſtent with their views than with the peace and ſafety of the government; that already too much ſcope had been given to ſuch enmities, but that now, it would be worthy of her dignity to diſcountenance them; and truſting to the public ſenſe of her merit and abilities to direct the helm of the ſtate, ſhew herſelf more ſtudious and attentive to preſerve the rights of the royalty, and the general tranquillity of the kingdom, than to build up any partial ſyſtem whatever. Catharine, awakened from her conſternation by thoſe hints, immediately underſtood what courſe ſhe ought to ſteer. By pretending there were ſome hopes of her ſons recovery, ſhe evaded anſwering the propoſals of the Guiſes. When

* D'Aubigne, ibid. chap. 22. Thuan. ibid.

the

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is privately reconciled to the king of Navarre,

the feeble remains of his life were almoſt extinguiſhed, ſhe ſignified to the dutcheſs of Montpenſier, that ſhe was not diſinclined to an amicable interview with the king of Navarre*. He was ſecretly introduced to her preſence, by means of the prince Dolphin, Montpenſier's ſon. The general terms of an agreement being condeſcended upon, though the particular adjuſtment of them was left to a future diſcuſſion, the fluctuation and diſquiet of her mind preſently ſubſided, and ſhe remained in a calmer diſpoſition to manage all events to the beſt advantage.

in the midſt of the confuſion of the parties.

THE king's life being generally deſpaired of; new diviſions and cabals aroſe among the nobles and officers of the court, who eaſily perceived, that a total change of the adminiſtration would neceſſarily enſue upon his death. The Guiſes, no longer able to overawe their opponents, or to command the obedience of thoſe forces, which they had aſſembled for the ſervice of the king, found it neceſſary to take meaſures for their own defence and ſecurity. Their principal friends, the duke of Nemours, the marſhals Briſſac and St. André, with the cardinal of Tournon and de Cipierre, governor of Orleans, were ſtill engaged to ſupport their authority. But many others of the nobility appeared to take part with the king of Navarre; who, encouraged and aſſiſted by the lords of Chatillon, had armed all his domeſtics, and diſpatched meſſengers to inform the conſtable Montmorency of the critical ſituation of things†. The ferment of faction and diſcord, when once kindled, ſpread univerſally over the court and city. The commanders of the troops, and the ſoldiers, were gained over on both ſides. The deputies of the ſtates entered into the contention; and the power of the parties being near equally balanced, they ſeemed only to be

* Thuan. ibid. † D'Avila, ibid.

with-

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with-held, by fear of each other, from coming to open violence and hoſtility. In the midſt of this combuſtion, on the fifth of December Francis II. breathed his laſt, when he had not completed the eighteenth year of his age, and reigned only one year and about eleven months. He had no iſſue. A king of ſo unripe an age hardly admits of being characterized in hiſtory; and eſpecially one who, during his ſhort enjoyment of royalty, was wholly reſigned to the counſels and direction of others. His * domeſtics are ſaid to have agreed in calling him, the *king without vice*. Their character of him, underſtood with reference to his manners and temper in private life, ſeems to be the only one applicable to him. But the conſtitutional qualities of innocence and ſimplicity, which are chiefly alluded to in it, if we endeavour to extend them to the ſphere of his public government, immediately diſappear, or are ſeen converted into impotence of mind and timidity, which rendered him the prey of the ambitious, and the unhappy tool of other mens paſſions, and capable † ſometimes of being agitated with the deſire of revenge, in proportion to the heights to which his natural fears were raiſed. It is a reflexion of d'Avila's, that it would have redounded to the peace of France, that either he had never ſucceeded to the crown, or elſe that he had lived until the deſigns then on foot had been completed. Though he does not pretend altogether to approve or commend the meaſures purſued, he ſeems confident they would have prevented the diſtractions of the ſtate from growing to ſuch extremity. But this amounts to no more than if he had obſerved, that the ſucceſſion of weak princes to crowns, and the untimely deaths of kings, are deplorable in governments, which in ſpite of the beſt ſpecifics that human policy

The king dies.

Dec. 5.

A character given of him by his domeſtics.

* Mezerai, tom. vi.

† Addit. aux Caſtel. liv. ii. chap. 8.

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can apply, tend to augment the diſorders and troubles incident to them. But, how far the deſigns which were carried on, by being perfected, would have proved a ſure and effectual remedy in the preſent caſe, is a point of doubtful ſpeculation and conjecture, rather than of poſitive judgment.

He is, without the leaſt ground, ſaid to have been poiſoned;

Though Francis was infirm and diſeaſed from his infancy, and after frequent complaints of pains in his head, was, at length, ſeized with a violent paroxyſm, that was followed by an abſceſs near his ear, under which he languiſhed and died; it was, however, the belief of many people, beſides the vulgar, that his ſurgeon, Ambroſe Paré, was hired by the king of Navarre to poiſon him. Inſtances of ſuch credulity, about the deaths of princes, ſo frequently occur in hiſtory, that the mention of it in this caſe only marks the obſtinacy of popular prejudices; which, though often expoſed, will ſtill prevail among a large claſs of mankind. The royalty, which was debaſed in Francis's life-time, alſo ſuffered diſhonour at his tomb. Notwithſtanding he expired at the time of the aſſembly of the ſtates, and when the court was crouded with prelates and peers, the cuſtomary honours and rites of a royal funeral were not appointed for him *. The proceſſion to St. Denis was attended by none of higher rank than San Sac and la Broſſe, who had been his governours, and Guillard the biſhop of Senlis, who had loſt his ſight. The whole court and nobility were too much immerſed in politics to beſtow due attention to the obſequies of the king. A billet was found ſtuck to the cloth which covered the pall, inſcribed with the words, *Tanneguy du Chaſtel*, where art thou? The ſarcaſm was obvious to every one, who could recollect a memorable ſtory, relating to the perſon who was named. He had diſtinguiſhed himſelf by many important ſervices in the reign

and is meanly entombed.

* D'Aubigne, ibid. chap. 23.

of

of Charles VII. and reſigned his place at court for the ſake of peace, and to relieve his ſovereign from diſturbance. When diſquiet and melancholy put an end to the life of this illuſtrious Monarch; and his ſon Lewis XI. who had proved undutiful and turbulent, neglected his obſequies; du Chaſtel, animated with a noble and generous concern, came from his retreat, and expended the ſum of thirty thouſand crowns upon the funerals of his deceaſed maſter. The invocation of one, who had given ſuch a proof of diſintereſted loyalty and affection, ſhrewdly expoſed the oppoſite conduct of Francis's guardians and aſſociates in the ſovereignty. The ſcandal of this juſtly fell upon the queen mother and the Guiſes; and furniſhed their opponents with grounds of invective, and of recrimination, in anſwer to the calumnious ſtory of their having poiſoned the king.

De Thou, who ſeldom palliates the objections made to the behaviour and conduct of the Guiſes, acknowledges, * that at this time their adverſaries, unreſtrained by fear, opened their mouths loudly againſt them, and poured out abundance of falſe clamour and aſperſions. They pretended now to have demonſtration of the truth of all their former ſuſpicions; and to make diſcoveries of new ſchemes they had formed for their aggrandizement. They affirmed that, in conſequence of their intention to cruſh and extirpate the Bourbon family, they had entered into a ſecret league to deliver up the county of Berne to the court of Spain; and that the marſhal de Thermes lay in the Limouſin with his troops for no other purpoſe; that Bleze Monluc, and other commanders, were engaged, by rewards and promiſes of ſharing in the ſpoils of the

The Guiſes are accuſed of the moſt ambitious deſigns.

* Thuan. lib. xxvi. p. 531.

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king of Navarre's houſe, to aſſiſt in deſtroying it; and that like meaſures were alſo taken to get the Colignis, and the conſtable Montmorency, ruined by circumvention, or oppreſſed by main force. The hiſtorian adds, that though it was utterly improbable that ever they could prevail with men of principles, and honour, ſuch as thoſe already named, to combine with them in purpoſes ſo baſe and infamous, yet the boundleſs luſt of power, with which the Guiſes were always actuated, and which, in an enſuing period, was exerted to ſubvert the foundations of the ſovereignty, proved thoſe cenſorious ſpeeches of their enemies, to be rather premature and prophetic, than unjuſt and groundleſs.

An eſtimate of their character and miniſtry.

To what height the duke of Guiſe and the cardinal of Lorain carried their ambitious views, in the reign of Francis II. we certainly ought to judge, from the courſe of their adminiſtration and the facts of that period, without anticipating a future ſcene of their actions, and eſpecially without looking forward to a greater diſtance of time, when not only circumſtances were totally changed, but when another duke of Guiſe aroſe in the memorable æra of the catholic league; and, as de Thou intimates, by his daring aſſaults upon the throne, confirmed the accuſations that were long before thrown out againſt his father and family. When, in this manner, we form our judgment of the Guiſes, not by the groſs, but, along with the neceſſary diſtinctions of times and conjunctures, in which the ſame perſons may be obſerved to vary principles and views, make alſo ſome allowance for them, on account of the difficult ſphere in which they acted, we will be led to reject, not only what their adverſaries propagated about their having deſigns upon the crown, but other particular imputations on their political character and conduct. Their place in the

government, which was intimated to the parliament of Paris, though it had not the concurrence of the ſtates general, gave them, in conjunction with queen Catharine, the authority without the name, of the young king's guardians. Upon the antient conſtitutions of the kingdom, perhaps it was queſtionable, but could not be pronounced an illegal uſurpation. Being of a foreign family, lately eſtabliſhed in France, their power was the more diſagreeable and offenſive to the nobility of that kingdom. In civil matters, their exerciſe of authority was immoderate, ſtrained to exceſs, and unequal; and in thoſe of religion, even with allowance for the times, cruel and outrageous. From the circumſtances of the government, unable to maintain the ſupreme authority which they held in the ſtate, without treading in thoſe footſteps of faction, they at once protected and injured the royalty. With perſonal abilities ſuited to the higheſt offices, and a ſplendid reputation, by which they outſhone their chief opponents; they deſerved and obtained a meaſure of adminiſtration and honour; while at the ſame time they were the objects of envy and hatred, on account of their grandeur. Emulous and capable of attaining real glory and renown, they were animated to the perſecution of the Hugonots, as a ſpecies of it conſiſtent with their political views; which, however, it might decorate them with the title of the defenders of the antient catholic religion, and render them the heads of the moſt powerful party, muſt be allowed to be more ſuitable to the epoch of the croiſades than to the middle of the ſixteenth century, and to be blackened with too much inhumanity to have the approbation in any civilized age, unclouded with ſuperſtition.

THE
HISTORY of FRANCE.

BOOK III.

Reign of CHARLES IX.

CHAP. I.

Diſpute about the regency of the kingdom—Policy of the queen mother in ſettling the adminiſtration—Aſſembly of the ſtates opened—Speeches of the deputies, and their ordinances—Oppoſition of the parliament of Paris to moderation in religious queſtions—Diſguſt of the conſtable Montmorency with the Colignis, and his cabal with the Guiſes—Origin and eſtabliſhment of the court of peers—The queen regent's jealouſy of the conſtable and the Guiſes—Reference of the queſtion about toleration to the parliament of Paris.

Book III. 1560. THE minorities of kings are the maladies of monarchical government; which ſearch the vigour and ſtrength of its principles. If theſe be unſound or weakly formed, the monarchy incurs the danger of anarchy, or of a ſudden revolution. From the number and nearly equal power of the great lords in the Gothic king-

doms

doms of Europe, who were more apt to oppoſe one another than to agree, the latter effect of the minorities has been rare; while the appearances of the former have proved frequent. The feudal conſtitution, in this caſe, tended to preſerve kingly government, but in a manner which ſhewed the diſparity of the cauſe to the effect produced by it. In the violent ferment of faction, which at the time of Francis's death ſeemed to hurry the ſtate into imminent danger, the party-leaders vied with one another in paying homage and ſubmiſſion to his brother and ſucceſſor Charles IX. who had not quite reached the eleventh year of his age.

Book III. 1560. Dec. 5.

When the rules of ſucceſſion, which remained a long time unfixed in the kingly governments of Europe, became explicit, and more poſitively authorized, both from the common opinion and practice of nations; it ſtill proved a matter of uncertainty in the caſe of the king's infancy or nonage, to what particular perſons or body of the ſtate the temporary exerciſe of ſovereign power belonged. In France, as well as in the other kingdoms, the different circumſtances of the government had varied the rule of procedure; but the ſtated and moſt prevailing uſage was * the wardſhip of the minor king to his mother, and to aſſign the office of regent to the firſt prince of the blood, aſſiſted by the late king's council of ſtate. This was ſo generally deemed to be one of the conſtitutional forms of the monarchy, that the excluſion of the king of Navarre, from the firſt place in government during the late reign, had excited oppoſition, and furniſhed the malcontents with a ſpecious ground of controverſy and indignation againſt the Guiſes. In the preſent minority therefore, his title to the chief adminiſtration

Charles IX. being in his minority, a difficulty ariſes about the regency.

* Vide ſupra. Vemon, Charles VII. Henault Abbrege. p. 225.

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tion appeared to be inconteſtible. The ſtates general were aſſembled, and could immediately ratify it by their conſent and approbation *. But the influence and reception of the moſt approved maxims, and conſtitutions of ſtates and kingdoms, muſt ſtill ſubmit to be regulated by the immediate ſituations and exigencies of government. In the preſent criſis it ſeemed that the king of Navarre could not with propriety be advanced to the regency: He who had been hitherto alienated from the court, and the royal family; and on whom the eye of ſuſpicion glanced, while his brother was condemned for diſloyalty. His tranſition from theſe circumſtances to ſupreme authority in the ſtate, might warp the reins of government in a manner which the ſtate of parties could not bear. The ſudden ſubverſion of the power of the Guiſes, which would be the immediate conſequence of this meaſure, appeared undeſireable and alarming to the queen mother, who refining upon the political intricacies which aroſe in her ſubtle mind, was eager and ſolicitous to rear up her own authority, by balancing the power of the oppoſite parties.

In the ſettlement of the adminiſtration, the queen mother's policy proves more effectual than the conſtitutional rules.

THE political mould of the French government was ſo far freed from the ſtubbornneſs of the antient feudal principles, that the artificial intrigue in which Catharine excelled, might be applied to it with ſucceſs. Favoured at this time by the contention of parties, her policy produced a conſiderable effect. She found the way to check the career of faction, to moderate the pretenſions of the ambitious, and to make animoſity yield to reaſons of ſtate. In her ‡ conference with the king of Navarre, before Francis expired, ſhe ſpoke to him like one who had proofs, and power ſufficient,

* D'Avila, liv. 2. Addit. aux Caſtelnau, liv. 3. ‡ Caſtelnau, ibid.

to

to condemn him as an accomplice with his brother in ſedition; and who would accept of no other juſtification of his conduct, but that of ſubmiſſion to her terms. She made it a point eſſential to their agreement, that he ſhould renounce all claim to the regency of the kingdom; and then offering to ſet the prince of Condé and the other priſoners at liberty, ſhe declared herſelf willing that he ſhould be appointed lieutenant-general and governor preſident, in all the provinces of France; and that the reſtitution of Navarre, or an equivalent for it, ſhould be demanded of the court of Spain. The king of Navarre was too penſive and perplexed in the preſent conjuncture, to be able to determine or declare his reſolution, further than by ſaying that he could not conclude upon any thing, until the conſtable Montmorency arrived. It was evident however, that by managing the parties, his acquieſcence would follow of courſe.

To keep terms with the Guiſes, who hitherto had been her aſſociates, and at the ſame time to promote an accommodation with the princes of Bourbon, proved a nice tryal of queen Catharine's policy †. Her addreſs and behaviour, with reſpect to her old friends, were very different from the tone ſhe had aſſumed with the king of Navarre. To the marſhal St. André, who was their confident, ſhe appeared to be embarraſſed, to have conceived no ſcheme of management, and to be only a thoughtful and dejected ſpectator of the calamity and confuſion, with which the government was threatened. She made him confeſs, that the ſafety of the ſtate required the reconcilement of parties, upon terms more moderate than what their impetuoſity and ambition might dictate. He became a convert to her ſentiments, by believing

† D'Avila, liv. ii.

himſelf

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himſelf to be the author of them; and even encouraged Catharine to follow that courſe, which ſhe had already taken with reſpect to the king of Navarre, while he engaged to bring the Guiſes to an agreement. In a few days by his means, and the aſſiduous endeavours of the dutcheſs of Montpenſier, Lewis de Lanſac, and de Cippierre, the governor of Orleans, who were perſons in eſteem with the different parties; diſcord appeared to give way, and the main obſtacles to peace were removed upon the footing which the queen mother had originally propoſed. The king of Navarre made two demands which might have unhinged the whole tranſactions. One was, that the Guiſes ſhould quit their places at court, and the other, that liberty of conſcience ſhould be granted to the Hugonots. But Catharine had the ſkill to elude thoſe articles, by giving him ground to hope, that they might in time be performed, though it was now unfit to inſiſt upon them.

The conſtable Montmorency being ſent for to the court, and gained by Catharine, the oppoſition of the parties is ſuſpended.

The liberation of the prince of Condé, and the arrival of the conſtable Montmorency, ſeemed to be the only ſignals which were wanting to confirm the union ‡. From the moment that Francis died, the prince was no longer conſidered as a priſoner. His guards ſignified to him that he might command them; but a point of honour would not allow him to reſume his liberty without a formal abſolution from the ſentence pronounced againſt him; and the queen mother, who dreaded his vehemence, took care to have this opinion inculcated upon him, in order to keep him from interfering in the negotiations. Montmorency had now ventured to advance near Orleans, and was at Eſtampes when he got notice of Francis's death. A meſſenger from Catharine had reached him there, to aſſure him that all the king's ſervants were now in the

‡ D'Aubigne, liv. ii. chap. 22.

free

free exercise of their offices; and that his presence at the court in this capacity, was much desired by her and the young sovereign. The governor of the city had orders, upon his entering the gates, to pay him all the honours of the constable of France, and to offer him the command of the whole body of the military *. When attended by a numerous retinue of his followers, he received at the gates of Orleans, those acknowledgements of his dignity; the long habit of authority, which against the bent of his mind had been for a while unexerted, immediately shewed its force, and prompted him to speak in the style of the old commander, and the important politician. Turning to the captains, he asked them with a magisterial voice, what they meant by this useless assemblage of soldiers and guards in the midst of the kingdom, and in the time of profound peace. "You shall know, said he, that there is no such duty as this to be done. Since the king has been pleased to recall me to the functions of my office, I will undertake he shall be obeyed in his minority, by his subjects in every part of the kingdom, without the shew of constraint." He reflected by this speech, upon the counsel of the Guises, and expressed what a novelty the maintenance of a few standing regiments appeared at that time in France. The reception the queen mother gave him was calculated to overcome his animosity. He was flattered with the opinion she seemed to have of his importance in the state. He was introduced to the young king as the guardian of the royalty. The old minister, who placed his honour and devotion in the royal house, shed tears at the interview, and immediately concurred in promoting the measures of peace.

* Matthieu, liv. v. p. 241. Thuan. lib. 26. p. 532.

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The king of Navarre attains the rank of preſident and governor general of the provinces, and Catharine that of regent.

The model of government, in conſequence of this compact, was regulated in the following manner ‡. The title and authority of regent of the kingdom were appropriated to queen Catharine, to whom all letters from governors of provinces, and commanders of garriſons, were to be addreſſed for the firſt inſpection. Foreign packets, after being lodged as formerly, in the hands of the ſecretaries, were alſo appointed to be brought to her for peruſal, and then to be carried to the council table. The king of Navarre, beſides the title and rank of preſident and governor of the provinces, was authorized to receive the perſonal applications of the provincial governors and officers, in matters relative to their places and charges; and upon the examination of their letters, after tranſmiſſion to the queen mother, to adviſe with her about the diſcuſſion of the buſineſs they contained; and in her abſence to preſide in the council of ſtate. All the great officers of the crown were ordained to execute their reſpective functions, without interfering with each other. The duke of Guiſe remained grand maſter of the palace, and the cardinal his brother, in the management of the revenues. It was evident that queen Catharine had ſecured to herſelf the chief direction of the government. The conſtable, and the Colignis, who were aware of this, thought it perhaps a ſcheme more eligible than to reſt the hinge of political affairs on the variable reſolutions of the king of Navarre. In contradiction to all the hiſtorians, Henault aſſerts, that queen Catharine * did not bear the title of regent of the kingdom. His opinion appears only to be grounded on this circumſtance, that the compromize that was made between Catharine and the king of Navarre, had not been particularly regiſtered in the court of parliament.

‡ Thuan. ibid. D'Avila, ibid.

* Abbrege chron. p. 332.

1560.

December 23. The assembly of the states is opened with a speech from the chancellor.

In the short space of eight days, this arrangement of the government, and composure of faction, being effectuated, the court proceeded to open the assembly of the states-general. The chancellor addressing them in the king's name, adapted his speech to the delicate posture of the government. He † made an encomium on the institution of the states, and pointed out the advantages arising to the monarchy from their institution; by which they served as the sinews and ligaments, to knit together the several orders of the kingdom. The fatal distractions that often arose in states, on the account of religion, he represented to be inconsistent with christianity, and shewed that violent and unnecessary persecutions on the one hand, and licentious innovations in religious principles on the other, would equally contribute to engender them. He insisted on the necessity of a general council being called by the pope; or that the ecclesiastical abuses might be remedied by a national one, and recommended the abolition of the party names of Papist and Hugonot, which were made use of as fire-balls in the kingdom. After having taken notice that such an example of loyalty, and submission to authority, was set by the king of Navarre, as was worthy of the first prince of the blood, he enjoined the imitation of his pacific disposition to all ranks of men in the government. Though such sentiments had not been agreeable to the chancellor's character, attention to the state of parties seemed to require the utterance of them. But it was impracticable to frame maxims or language, that could please the taste of the factious. Fault was found with him, that he exalted queen Catharine's authority at the expence of the dignity of the first prince of the blood.

† Thuan. lib. 27. p. 548.

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THE deputies of the ſtates having met next day in three different monaſteries, a queſtion was ſtarted, whether they could regularly proceed to reſolutions, without having recourſe to their conſtituents for new inſtructions in a new reign †. The king's council, when the point of difficulty was brought before them, determined that their commiſſions had not expired, becauſe, according to a maxim in law, the royalty never died. In various caſes, monarchy ſuppoſes the eſtabliſhment of fundamental laws; and in others it requires to be aided by the fictions of juriſprudence. The three orders then agreed to chuſe each of them a ſpeaker. In Francis's life-time the cardinal of Lorain had the arrogance to propoſe that he alone ſhould ſpeak in behalf of the clergy, nobles, and commons; but now he was obliged to drop this vain pretenſion. The harangue ‡ of the deputy of the third eſtate was firſt heard, and that of the ſpeaker followed it. The chief topic of both was a detail of the corruptions and offences of the clergy, which were declared to be the manifeſt ſource of religious apoſtacy and ſchiſm. Their ignorance, avarice, and luxury, were arraigned; their encroachments upon the juriſdictions of the nobility, and their reſigning to the loweſt of the order the paſtoral charge, were exclaimed againſt. This ſtyle was not at all ſtrange or unuſual; but the concluſion of the baron of Rochefort's ſpeech, in which he demanded in the name of the nobility, the liberties of temples for ſuch as choſe ſeparate worſhip, ſhewed that the ſpirit of controverſy with the catholic ſyſtem had taken too firm a hold of mens minds, to be ſurmounted by ordinary remedies.

A queſtion moved about the commiſſions of the deputies being invalid in the new reign.

QUINTIN, the ſpeaker for the clerical order, had ſome ſingular ſtrokes in his defenſive oration *. As the load of complaints was laid

Anſwer of the ſpeaker for the clergy to the invectives againſt the corruptions of the order.

† Henault. p. 330. ‡ D'Aubigne, ibid. chap. 24. * Thuan. ibid.

laid ſo heavy upon the church and the clergy, he thought fit to put the aſſembly in mind that the church itſelf, as the body of Chriſt, was liable to no error or deformity; and that in ſtrictneſs of language, men ought not to talk of amending or reforming the church, when ſuch reformation could only be meant of her outward ſtate, and her diſcipline. The change in the antient order about the elections to benefices, he alledged, had opened a new ſource of corruption and degeneracy, which had been immediately felt, ever ſince the concordat was eſtabliſhed; and that it was well known that the broachers of hereſy had ſtarted up and followed one another in a cloſe ſucceſſion, from the very year which gave it birth. He demanded, that the king would remove this ſtone of ſtumbling from the houſe of God, and reſtore the privilege of the pragmatic ſanction. After inveighing againſt the pretended reformers of the catholic faith, he added with vehemence, that he, and they who preſented the petitions of hereticks, ought to be deemed the patrons of hereſy; and as ſuch deſerved to be proſecuted according to the canon and civil laws. This reflexion was underſtood by the moſt part of the aſſembly, to be pointed at the admiral Coligni, who could not avoid complaining next day of the inſidious attack upon him, and inſiſting that Quintin ſhould be obliged to explain himſelf publickly. It was determined that he ſhould make a proper apology for the offenſive expreſſions, when the deputies aſked leave of the king to break up.

THE ſtates were diſpoſed to have brought the general point of the regency under deliberation † before them; but the chancellor, aſſiſted by the chief lords of the council of ſtate, diverted them from it. Though many of the deputies were believed to have

The diſpute about the regency diverted in the aſſembly of the ſtates.

† Matthieu, ibid.

been

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been gained over by the late influence of the Guiſes; yet their general ſuffrages in the preſent juncture, would have coincided with the antient rule of the monarchy, and preferred the advancement of the firſt prince of the blood to the regency, inſtead of the queen mother. The particular diſcuſſion of this matter was therefore avoided, and the acquieſcence of the deputies in the plan of government was underſtood to be expreſſed by the confirmation of the king of Navarre, in the office of lieutenant general; and by other acts and regulations reſpecting the model of the ſtate. The great debts of the crown, which were * reckoned to amount to forty-two millions of livres, occaſioned ſome propoſals to be made about the reparation of the finances, that were diſguſtful to the Guiſes. To ſhun contention it was only determined that the ſuperfluous offices of the crown ſhould be aboliſhed, and the emoluments of others reduced. To gratify the deputies of the third order, and encourage the commons to contribute to diſcharge the burdens of the treaſury, the pecuniary exactions to which all purchaſeable poſts and commiſſions under the crown, became liable in a new reign, were diſpenſed with. A general indemnity for the late diſorders was granted. The provincial judges and officers were ordered to ſet at liberty all that were impriſoned for religion; and to reſtore them their confiſcations. The concluſion of the aſſembly was haſtened by the queen regent, who, ſatisfied with the recognizance of her authority, choſe not to be too much encumbered with the claims of the ſtates. Their ſeſſions were adjourned to the month of May, at which time only two deputies out of the thirteen chief provinces of the kingdom, were ordered to meet at Pointoiſe, and make the neceſſary proviſion for the payment of the crown debts, and the regulation of the ſubſidies.

* Henault, ibid. Caſtlenau, liv. iii. p. 65.

AMONG

1560.

Ordinances of the ſtates.

AMONG other important ordinances of the ſtates at Orleans, the clergy obtained that of the ſuſpenſion of the ſtatute of the concordat, which at firſt had occaſioned great clamour, and was ſtill conſidered to be prejudicial to the church: At leaſt the power of the election of biſhops is ſaid to have been reſtored to the chapters of the collegiate churches. From Quintin's harangue to the ſtates, and other paſſages in hiſtory, it appears that the clergy, beſides reſenting the invaſion of their rights by the concordat, repreſented the abolition of the privilege of election to church benefices, as the bane and diſgrace of the ſacred order. The argument was, that men of proper qualifications would ceaſe to be preferred in the church, when inſtead of a canonical choice, the king's nomination determined the buſineſs. If we credit * the report of ſome hiſtorians of that age, concerning thoſe eccleſiaſtical elections, they were by no means ſubſervient to the promotion of real merit, or honourable to the church. The character of the electors, who were the canons and monks, can give no favourable idea of their capacity or taſte in chuſing their biſhops and abbots. The monks, who underſtood nothing beſides the ſtatutes of their order, failed not to elect men according to their own hearts. The perſon from whom they expected a deference to their jargon, and and the moſt liberal indulgences, was their favourite abbot or prior. With thoſe qualifications his perſonal defects or vices were not unacceptable. When the one or the other was a ſot, a debauchee, or minded only his pleaſures, they lived as they pleaſed. The canons ſold their votes, and turned the epiſcopal elections to their emolument. Cabals, ſcuffles, and bloody frays, frequently attended the competitions. Such the elections are declared to have

* Matthieu, liv. ii. p. 50. Brantome de Francis I.

been,

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been, for which the clergy and the univerſities ſtruggled with the court, and which were pronounced by Quintin to be the eccleſiaſtical barriers againſt hereſy. Francis I. had the juſt pretext of numberleſs abuſes, for introducing the concordat. He alſo deſired to reward ſome of the nobility for their ſervices, with the gift of an abbacy or priory in Commendam. The biſhops nominated by the king, generally aſſumed more of the air of men of the world. They appeared at court, and were not ſo ſcrupulous as their predeceſſors had been, about reſidence in their dioceſes. Their knowledge, their morals, and their behaviour, ſeemed however to be improved to advantage. They were leſs incumbered with the wealth they had, when they expended it in the ſociety of the nobles at court. But this freer ſtyle of life to which the dignitaries of the church began to aſpire, at a time when the clergy were much expoſed to obloquy, was alſo condemned. It was forgot what many of them had been in their former more recluſive condition; and the cry was raiſed, that they did not preach and attend their epiſcopal duty. Though the retired, loitering, and ſelfiſh lives of the biſhops, had neither exalted their characters, nor edified the church; people were diſpleaſed with ſeeing them preſume to mingle with the world. In the midſt of affluence, ſequeſtered from it, they made a prepoſterous figure. When they frequented the court, their clerical character ſeemed to diſappear, by imitating its modes and faſhions. In almoſt every country, the exterior appearance of the clergy may be reckoned a problem difficult to be determined to the ſatisfaction of mankind. At this time the biſhops received an order in the king's name to prepare for attending the expected council at Trent; and the conſideration of the petition for liberty of ſeparate worſhip, was remitted to the next meeting of the ſtates.

When

BOOK III.

1561.

The partition of the ſupreme power cauſes turbulence in the adminiſtration.

WHEN the hinge of government reſts on the coalition of parties, which, for any conſiderable time, have been ſtated in oppoſition to one another, its tranquillity is rendered precarious. It ſeldom happens that the plan of adminiſtration is properly adjuſted, and the courſe of affairs daily diſcovers to each of the factions, the diſagreeable reſtraints which their luſt of power muſt undergo. This conſequence was the more inevitable in the preſent poſture of the government of France; becauſe the queen mother, in order to poſſeſs the regency, had been obliged to advance the king of Navarre to a kind of parity * of rank and dignity with herſelf in the ſtate. What he wanted of equal authority, appeared to be compenſated by many important conceſſions; and was yet further ſupplied by ſome promiſes ſhe had made with reſpect to the excluſion of the Guiſes from the court, and the toleration of the Hugonots. From the belief of the deference that was to be paid to him, and an inclination to manifeſt his importance, he began immediately to dictate in the management of affairs, and to inſiſt for ſuch alterations as he expected to be made in the ſyſtem of the court †. To relieve the exigencies of the royal treaſury by a general revocation of the gratuities beſtowed among the courtiers in the late reigns, was one of his favourite projects. He did not conſider that by this meaſure he might offend ſeveral of his friends, and particularly the conſtable Montmorency, as much as the Guiſes, who, after reckoning all their lucrative perquiſites, were believed to have expended more in the ſervice of the crown than they had received. When an order of council was obtained for reducing the ſalaries of the offices of the houſehold one half, and the penſions a third part, with exception of foreigners, whether

January.

* Matthieu, liv. v. p. 242. † Thuan. ibid. p. 561.

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residing in or out of the kingdom, a piece was wrote and presented to him, to prove the absurdity and insignificance of allowing subsidies and pensions to foreigners in time of peace. The Italian pensioners, whose depredations on ecclesiastical benefices had been often exclaimed against, were particularly animadverted upon in this performance, which made him sensible that to read it at the council table, as he had proposed, might be deemed an indignity to the queen regent. Where an alteration was least required, he procured one to be made. The few Scottish troops of horsemen, which the kings of France ever since the reign of Charles VII. had kept as their body guard, were disbanded by his advice. Though as to religious principles, he remained in that suspence which was natural to him, and was perplexed more than convinced, by the arguments he heard from the protestant divines at Nerac; his vanity, or his complaisance, led him to tell the Danish ambassador Gluc, that, before a year elapsed, he would cause the pure and evangelical word of God to be publickly preached all over the kingdom; and that he might communicate this intelligence to his master.

Moderation about religious questions shewn by Catharine.

The queen regent had by this time overcome most of her scruples about the toleration of the protestants. The general prejudice to their peculiar tenets, had never much affected her; and the bishop of Valence, who was her favourite instructor, had confirmed her propensity to moderation, or rather indifference in religious matters. The appearance made by the deputy of the nobles, to obtain publick liberty of conscience, and the knowledge she had that the Colignis had exerted themselves to promote it, were sufficient to convince her of the necessity of some compliance. But to lose

loſe none of her credit with the different parties, ſhe ſtill wiſhed to protract her reſolution. Accuſtomed to foil the ſolicitations of the king of Navarre, ſhe evaded them for ſome time by her uſual addreſs; and underſtood how to yield the point at length in ſuch a manner, as might leaſt expoſe her to cenſure *. After the king of Navarre had taken the labour of importunity, and by urging it in the king's council, made the buſineſs his own deed, ſhe conſented to paſs a decree which prohibited all diſturbance of private houſes, by ſearching them for clandeſtine aſſemblies of people, allowed all thoſe to return in ſafety who had quitted the kingdom on account of religion, and aſſured them of full ſecurity for their perſons and properties, on condition they lived peaceably, and obſerved catholic decorum. The opprobrious names of Hugonot and Papiſt were forbid to be uſed. The tranſmiſſion † of this ordinance contrary to form to the governors of provinces, without being addreſt to the courts of parliament, was a circumſtance which derogated from its authority, and hindered its general reception. The parliament of Paris immediately took offence at this infringement of their privileges; and having interrupted its publication in the city by a remonſtrance to the king, they quarrelled the indirect permiſſion of liberty of conſcience, and the other articles of lenity to thoſe of the proteſtant faith which it contained. Thus unhappily for the publick peace, the court found it difficult to change thoſe maxims hitherto followed in the kingdom with reſpect to religion; and could not, without exciting a conſiderable alarm, favour publick toleration, which had been ſo long held to be pernicious and execrable.

January 28th.

But the parliament of Paris is averſe to it;

SINCE indulgence to the proteſtants had never been the act of the government in France, and the ſeverities exerciſed againſt them,

* D'Avila, ibid. † Matthieu, ibid.

Book III. 1561. them, had been continued with little interruption, and vindicated both from religious and political principles; and ſince the rancorous ſpirit of perſecution was now further ſupported by the violence of party; the tranſition to liberty of conſcience appeared to be entangled with more difficulties than at firſt. In the preſent circumſtances of the ſtate, it was even believed by many leading men of the court, to be one of queen Catharine's artificial reſources, rather than a meaſure adapted to the exigencies of the kingdom ‡. The late ſudden acceſſion of power and intereſt to the proteſtant party, provoked the indignation of the leading catholicks; while the clergy, from zeal, employed virulent harangues and execrations, to ſtimulate the prejudices and horror of the vulgar againſt the toleration of hereticks. An experiment was made by the Colignis, which ſhewed how dangerous it was to tamper with the ſuperſtition predominant in the minds of the multitude. The cardinal of Chatillon, who was generally beloved by the people of his dioceſe, ventured to celebrate the Euchariſt in the chapel of his epiſcopal palace, and diſpenſe it according to the proteſtant ritual in both kinds to his domeſtics. At the rumour of this innovation the town was filled with the uproar of the populace. Several houſes were attacked by them; a perſon in proteſtant orders was made the victim of their fury: and the palace being beſet by them, the cardinal was called for in an outrageous manner. But when he ſhewed himſelf at the window in his purple veſtments, they were ſtruck with awe, and quickly diſperſed.

And the difficulty about a toleration rather increaſes.

March.

March 13th. WHEN the court removed to Fountainbleau, the prince of Condé's abſolution was pronounced by the king's * council; and an order

‡ Thuan. ibid. p. 566.

* Addit. aux Caſtel. tom. i. p. 703. Matthieu, ibid. p. 244.

given

given for his obtaining a public repeal of the judgment againſt him, before the court of parliament. It appears that all the forms of a judicial proceſs were obſerved on this occaſion, and that the benefit of the redreſs was extended to the memory of the Vidame of Chartres, who died in priſon. The review, and ſecond trial of the cauſe, the recital and approbation of the decree, in an extraordinary aſſembly of the parliament in red robes, and its ſubſequent publication in all the provincial chambers, diſcover a ſolemnity of procedure, which may be reckoned peculiar to this tribunal, beyond any other at that time in Europe. Book III. 1561.

The king of Navarre refractory in the poſſeſſion of authority,

In the enjoyment of his authority, the king of Navarre appeared ſometimes no leſs capricious and unruly, than he had been tame, and recumbent in the want of it *. The offence he took at the duke of Guiſe having the keys of the caſtle of Fountainbleau brought to him, as maſter of the palace, bred the greateſt confuſion in the court. He alledged, that by his commiſſion of lieutenant-general, the cuſtody of them belonged to him. No arguments could make him deſiſt from this ill-founded pretenſion. The queen regent, ſenſible how dangerous it was to gratify his humour, by manifeſtly affronting the Guiſes, endeavoured to terminate the conteſt, by ordering the keys to be lodged in her own apartment. The expedient did not ſatisfy him. He ſent off part of his equipage, and appeared next day prepared to leave the court in high diſpleaſure. All the princes of the blood, even the duke of Montpenſier, who had always before kept cloſe to the court; and his dutcheſs's counſel, the conſtable and his ſons, the Colignis and their friends, ſeemed unanimouſly determined to join the king of Navarre in this

threatens to leave the court.

* Thuan. ibid. p. 562.

purpoſed

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purpoſed retreat; and as it was given out to proceed to Paris to ſettle the model of the government. In this unexpected and ſurpriſing rupture, queen Catharine * diſplayed her ſpirit and ingenuity in a remarkable way. She pitched on the conſtable as the perſon moſt likely to be retained, by the influence of the royal authority. The cardinal of Tournon was ſent to him to require his attendance upon the king. When he came, four ſecretaries ſat before Charles, who were commanded to write down the order he now gave to Montmorency, upon his allegiance to continue near his perſon, and execute his office, and then to record the anſwer he ſhould make. The conſtable, unable to withſtand this critical inqueſt of his loyalty, immediately promiſed to obey. His compliance ſtopt the rout of the king of Navarre; when he reflected that it might leſſen the idea of his importance, if the court appeared to ſubſiſt for any time without his concurrence. It coſt the queen a freſh recognition of his authority, and other particular conceſſions, in order to pack up a reconcilement.

The queen regent, though much alarmed, did not immediately diſcover all the ground ſhe had ‡ for conſternation; nor did the king of Navarre well underſtand what were the views of ſome of his party in this conjuncture. While at court, Catharine thus endeavoured to prevent the eruption of diſcord; the aſſembly of the provincial deputies at Pointoiſe, which now approached, had eſcaped her attention. As a certain number of delegates from the provinces had only been appointed to meet, the late ſtates general had enjoined them to confine their deliberations to the ſubſidies, and the payment of the debts of the crown, without interfering in what regarded the adminiſtration of the kingdom †. But it was

Political methods being uſed at the election of the deputies of the ſtates;

* D'Avila. ibid. ‡ Matthieu, ibid. † Thuan. ibid.

known,

known, by what paſſed in the meetings at Paris about the election of the deputies, that pains had been taken, and inſtructions given them, to make them extend their conſultations to the general ſtate of the government. It was intimated that in ſuch a convention of the ſtates, the point of the regency ought to be freely examined and diſcuſſed; and that the king of Navarre's reſignation of his title to this high office, or his acquieſcence in the aſſumption of it by another, could never be deemed a regular and valid determination of this important queſtion. This general attack upon the adminiſtration was not all that was meditated. The popular project of calling the miniſters in the late reigns to account for their management of the finances, and the recovery of the grants and largeſſes of the crown revenues to favourites and miſtreſſes, were alſo to be inſiſted upon. The Guiſes, with the dutcheſs of Valentinois and the marſhal St. André, were not only particularized as objects of this inquiry; but the conſtable Montmorency was, likewiſe, declared to be obnoxious to it; though the manner in which he was named, ſhewed there was nothing deſigned to his prejudice. This ſcheme of procedure, we have already obſerved, was agreeable to the king of Navarre; but it appears to have been puſhed on at this time by others, from political motives and deſigns, that he did not clearly conceive *. It ſeems that the prince of Condé and the Colignis took this courſe to make the queen regent ſenſible of their influence on the reſolutions of the ſtates, and to oblige her and the conſtable to concur in their views of obtaining the free exerciſe of religion to the proteſtants. The effect it had on the queen was, in ſome meaſure, anſwerable to their wiſhes, who was glad to expreſs her complaiſance to them, by the edict already

A debate about the general adminiſtration is revived.

* D'Avila, ibid.

mentioned:

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mentioned: but with reſpect to Montmorency, the conſequence proved very different.

But the conſtable an adverſary to toleration;

It was not without reaſon that the Colignis apprehended their uncle the conſtable, would require ſome particular inſtigation to adopt their ſcheme of ſtrengthening their party, by ſupporting the proteſtants and introducing religious toleration. He, who was naturally rigid, and habituated to the arbitrary maxims of the court, who remembered the reigns of Francis I. and Henry, in which the ſevereſt edicts were made, with fondneſs and ſecret ſelf-applauſe, was unlikely to learn now leſſons of a milder and more generous policy *. Strict in all diſcipline, he could not obſerve, without diſguſt, the encroachments made on the antient religious forms. The licences taken by his friends of the new profeſſion in the days of Lent, their apparent ſcorn of the catholic rites, and the retention of miniſters by the prince of Condé and the admiral to preach in their apartments, within the verge of the court, tended to give him offence. When he complained of thoſe abuſes, the queen mother excuſed herſelf, by telling him that ſhe ſuffered them with reluctance, for the ſake of pleaſing the preſent humour of the king of Navarre; but that it became him and the reſt of the nobility to teſtify their diſſatisfaction, and to aſſiſt her in maintaining the inſtitutions of the church. But when the biſhop of Valence mounted the pulpit, in the chapel of the caſtle, in his cloke and hat, and aſſumed in his † diſcourſe the freedom of reproving the corruptions tolerated in the court of Rome; the conſtable was highly provoked, and ſaid aloud, that it "was enough to have ſtumbled once upon ſuch a contraſt to the clerical decorum, but that he ſhould beware

* Thuan. ibid. p. 563. Brantome de Connetable. † Addit. aux Caſtel. liv. ii. chap. 5.

of

of it for the future." He now concluded that the queen, notwithſtanding her profeſſed enmity to the Hugonots, had entered into the plot of encouraging their party; and that Monluc was the perſon who had engaged her to purchaſe the king of Navarre's friendſhip by favouring them. Perſuaded he had made a diſcovery with reſpect to his friends, which ſhewed their petulant affectation of principles, political and religious, ſo contrary to thoſe he was known to have followed in the adminiſtration of the ſtate; he was irritated, and became diffident and averſe both to the queen mother and his nephews.

is diſguſted with the Colignis;

THE conſtable, in this temper, was ſufficiently inclined to liſten to the arguments of his wife, who, aſſiſted by the marſhal de St. André, and the friends of the dutcheſs of Valentinois, was aſſiduous in repreſenting the conduct of the Colignis in the moſt unfavourable light, and to perſuade him that they more conſulted their own aggrandizement than the honour of his family. "That houſe, the enſigns of which proclaimed him the deſcendant of the firſt chriſtian baron in France, ought ever, ſaid they, to place its glory in adherence to the church, and maintaining the antient faith." His eldeſt ſon, the marſhal Montmorency *, who ſaw what conſequence theſe impreſſions would produce, endeavoured to prevent his being hurried away by them to ſteer a new and excentric courſe, by which he would divide his friends and weaken his intereſt. This young nobleman already diſcovered the traces of that eminent character he afterwards ſuſtained. With hereditary magnanimity, he was diſcerning, prudent, liberal in his ſentiments, poliſhed and engaging in his manners and addreſs; and, by the natural caſt of his genius to moderation, and the gentler

* Brantome de Montmorenci. Thuan. ibid.

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virtues, qualified to act with dignity and approbation in that particular poſt aſſigned him in the midſt of the commotions of the ſtate. He now endeavoured to prevail with his father to check the ſwell of his catholic zeal, and to convince him, that in conſiſtency with his former conduct, and the honour and intereſt of his houſe, it became him to ſtand diſengaged from the violence of the contending parties, and render himſelf the controuler of the ſeveral factions, and the ſtay of the ſtate. A different conduct, he alledged, would be contrary to the moderate procedure of the queen regent, and diſguſt the king of Navarre and all his adherents. To theſe and other arguments offered in vindication of his nephews, he anſwered, according to the political creed of the age, "That religious innovations would ſubvert the civil government, and that he could never ſuffer the public acts and ſtatutes of his royal maſter Henry II. to be infringed or aboliſhed." The Colignis eſſayed in vain to appeaſe him. Having reſiſted all their ſolications, he became more precipitant, and in the abſence of his ſon the marſhal, began to cabal with the Guiſes. This was the ſingular but neceſſary reſult of his disjunction from his friends. He ſpoke of religion, and of the king, and his brothers, whom he called his little maſters, as his principal care; while, fearing to ſtand alone, he ſought to preſerve his influence in the ſtate, by a coalition with that party, which had always rivalled his power, triumphed in his depreſſion, and had, ſcarcely yet, reſigned the hold of ſupreme authority in the kingdom.

and from averſion to the Hugonots, cabals with the Guiſes.

May 15. 1561. Charles IX. being crowned at Rheims;

The aſſembly of the ſtates at Pontoiſe was adjourned, on account of the coronation of the young king, which took place at Rheims, in the middle of May, with the antient ceremony of the unction with the holy oil, believed to have been ſent from heaven, and preſerved

preſerved by a miracle from the days of Clovis. Among many diſtinctive names and titles of honour which were invented by the Gothic nations, and inferred precedency of rank and office: in France that of prince of the blood and of peer was the moſt illuſtrious. A diſpute, which aroſe at the ſolemnity of the inauguration, ſhewed how productive of doubtful controverſy, and liable to variation ſuch political inventions became, when the obſolete regulations and modes of a remote age, which time had mouldered away, were ſtill maintained, and the preſent honours of the ſtate ſuppoſed to depend on the recognition of them. It was contended whether peerage or the quality of the royal blood gave priority of rank in the ceremonial of the coronation; and the duke of Monpenſier and the duke of Guiſe were the competitors. Both of them were peers; but the latter inſiſted that the more early erection of his peerage of Guiſe entitled him to preference. The former alledged, that his privilege of blood ought to decide the point in his favour. At the acceſſion of the late king, the pretenſion of the duke of Guiſe to precedency had been acquieſced in; and that of his father, which was the ſame, though queſtioned, had yet been ſuſtained at the coronation of Henry II. What renders this controverſy the more worthy of attention, is the reference it hath to one of the moſt antient inſtitutions of the monarchy, that of the twelve peers of France.

a diſpute ariſes about the precedency of the peers to the princes of the blood.

In the feudal governments, it is known that the title of * peers or *Pares curiæ*, was applied to thoſe who held their fiefs or military tenures of land, of one and the ſame lord. In France, and in other countries, not only all the greater fiefs, but the baronies and

Hiſtorical account of the origin and eſtabliſhment of the court of peers.

* Du Cange in voce Pares. Paſquier, liv. ii. chap. 9. Addit. aux Caſtel. liv. ii. chap. 11.

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leſſer ones, had the right or cuſtom of peerage, by which the vaſſals were engaged to attend the courts of their common feudal ſuperior, of whom they held their territorial grants. Above all others the vaſſals of the crown, which may be conſidered as the paramount fief, were early diſtinguiſhed in the monarchy, by the name of the peers of France *. They compoſed a court, which judged in all diſputable queſtions and pleas reſpecting the royal domain; aſcertained the feudal rights and claims of the ſovereign; witneſſed the grants and inveſtitures of lands, juriſdictions and dignities that were given by him, and preſided at his coronation. It is generally and with reaſon preſumed, that all the vaſſals who held their lands immediately of the crown, however unequal and different the value and extent of their fiefs might be, were originally placed on the ſame footing, and admitted as conſtituent members of the king's court. From the prevailing principle of the feudal ſyſtem, which meaſured the privilege and dignity of the vaſſals from the fealty ſworn, and the homage owned by them; it ſeems evident, indeed, that all ſuch lords and barons as were equal to the dukes and counts, by having the ſovereign for their immediate ſuperior, were alike entitled to be ſummoned to his court, and to have proceſſes that concerned them determined before him, by the ſuffrages of their peers. But here the obſcurity of this piece of antient hiſtory diſcovers itſelf; ſince, from the earlieſt accounts that have been collected about the origin of the court of peers, it was conſtituted of twelve members. In this eſtabliſhment there would ſeem to have been, not only ſuch a change and deviation from the original conſtitution, as may be aſcribed to accidental

* Paſquier, ibid. chap. 10. Boulainvilliers, lett. 5. La France dans ſa Splendeur, par Louyet, chap. 11.

circum-

circumſtances, but a political regulation deſigned and fixed on purpoſe, though hiſtory gives no preciſe information, either as to the time or the occaſion of it *. Certain it is, that at the acceſſion of Hugh Capet, there was a much greater number than ſix ſecular peerages which held of the crown. By what means, or on what account they came to be circumſcribed to a particular number, is a difficulty that has not been explained. It is almoſt needleſs to inſert the vague and imaginary conjectures of the hiſtorians upon this head †. By ſome it hath been ſuppoſed, that the reſtriction might be made to avoid the trouble of aſſembling, at every trial, the whole of the crown vaſſals. Others again have alledged, that it might ariſe from the diſtribution of the royal domain into ſeven great fiefs, by Charles the Simple; one of which being annexed to the crown by Hugh Capet, the other ſix continued till they were augmented by the ſame number of eccleſiaſtical ones. But as this appropriation of the privilege of the peerage to a certain number of the crown vaſſals, in prejudice to the equal right of the reſt, ſhews there was ſome alteration in the chief feudal court that cannot properly be accounted for; ſo neither can the time when it took place be particularly aſcertained. That the origin of the peerage coincides with that of the feudal conſtitution, is generally agreed, and it is known ‡ that the form and order of it was entirely ſettled, when Philip the Auguſt, 1179, received his inauguration; at which ſolemnity Henry II. of England attended as duke of Normandy, and the other peers performed their offices. The dukes of Burgundy, Normandy, and Guienne, and the counts of Thouloufe, Flanders and Champagne, were the ſix ſecular peers: the arch-

* L'Abbe de Mably, tom. ii. p. 298.

† Boulainvilliers, ibid. Henault Abbrege, p. 94. Le Gendre, tom. i. p. 44.

‡ Henault, p. 135. Boulainvil. ibid. Louvet, ibid.

biſhop

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biſhop of Rheims, the biſhops of Laon, Langres, Beauvais, Chalons, and Noyon, were the eccleſiaſtical ones.

As almoſt none of the feudal eſtabliſhments were regulated by fixed principles or ſtated forms, ſo neither was that of the court of peers. If the lords, whoſe fiefs were inferior in value and importance to thoſe of the twelve peers, were not allowed to poſſeſs the privilege and dignity, for which the nature of their homage qualified them, this did not hinder an encroachment to be made on the prerogative of the peerage, by others who had no claim to ſhare in it. It is certain, that other * barons and biſhops were ſoon called to aſſiſt at the aſſizes of the king's feudal court, and that the chancellor, the conſtable, and other domeſtic officers of the prince were admitted to take their ſeats in it, and to give their judgments in the cauſes of the peers. According to the uſual form, the peers were ſummoned or adjourned, by two of their number; but this practice was ſoon varied, and in the caſe of the counteſs of Flanders 1224, the adjournment by two knights was declared to be ſufficient. In this manner the court of peers, changeable in its conſtitution, came to be, in ſome meaſure, confounded with the general aſſizes of all their different vaſſals, which were held by the kings. It was called by the general name of the king's court, and by that of the parliament in the middle of the thirteenth century; and when that particular court of juſtice, named the parliament of Paris, was fully conſtituted, the judicial authority of the peers was at length tranferred to it. Private lords did not preſide in their feudal courts, when a cauſe was tried in which they were parties; but this denomination was not reckoned applicable to the ſovereigns of the ſtate.

* L'Abbe de Mably, tom. ii. p. 84. Boulainvil. lett. 6.

BY

By the immutability of the church, the ſix eccleſiaſtical peerages, which originally had appertained to lay counts and lords, were ſheltered from thoſe revolutions incident to the ſecular ones *. Forfeitures, extinctions of heirs, and other changes, operated againſt the latter, and reduced their number, while the former maintained their identity †. To ſupply this deficiency, the kings began to create new peerages by their letters patent, and even to multiply thoſe ſecular dignities of the crown. Philip-le-bel erected five of them, and his ſon Lewis Hutin made the addition of two more. In the beginning of this innovation, and for a long period of time, the peerages were conferred on the princes of the blood. Stranger princes were afterwards inveſted with them; and at laſt ſome chief lords of the court. The conſtable Montmorency was the firſt of the latter admitted to this dignity. Still, however, after the multiplication of the peers, the antient regulation about their number and function was maintained at the royal coronation. Each of them repreſented one of the original twelve, and took their place of honour according to the date of the erection of their lands into peerages; at leaſt this was underſtood to be the only ſettled rule for precedency. By the obſervance of it, a prince of the blood might happen, as in the caſe above mentioned, to be preceded in rank by an elder peer ‡. The duke of Guiſe's former poſſeſſion of the firſt place, confidently ſupported with the argument, that where the peers exerciſed their chief function, the dignity of blood ought not to be conſidered, prevailed to give him the contended pre-eminence. But after all, this controverſy being new and unknown till the reign of Henry II. when others, beſides

* Louvet. ibid. Henault, p. 253. † Boulainvilliers, lett. 6.

‡ Thuan. lib. xxvii. p. 565.

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princes or lords of the blood, were created peers, it was now too haſtily and improperly determined. The preſent deciſion againſt the dignity of the blood royal was diſannulled by the aſſembly of the ſtates general, which met at Blois in the enſuing reign of Henry III.

The conſtable and the Guiſes being intirely reconciled,

The cold formalities of reconciliation, which often interrupt the agreement of ſmaller enmities, did not retard the ſurpriſing union of the conſtable Montmorency and the duke of Guiſe. When once the firſt ſtep to it on each ſide was taken, the coalition was accompliſhed. They received the ſacrament together at the ſame table, in atteſtation of their ſincerity and the correſpondence of their motives; and after ſome viſits and interviews, all their former differences were declared to be buried in oblivion *. At this emergency, ſo unlooked for, and now, in the proſpect, ſo fraught with conſequences, none was more aſtoniſhed than the queen mother: ſhe who meant only to ſtir up a little jealouſy in the conſtable toward the king of Navarre, and from the habit of ſuch artifice, thought nothing alarming could enſue from it. On account of the reduplication of her fears about this political phenomenon, and of the late diſguſt the king of Navarre had received in the affair of the charge of the keys, ſhe endeavoured to court, with earneſtneſs, the favour of his party, and by cloſer engagements with them, to ſupport herſelf at a delicate juncture; when the meeting of the ſtates drew near, and a new birth of faction threatened to diſturb her ſcheme of holding the balance among the different parties. She was even led to make it preponderate on that ſide, which promoted religious toleration. From the king of Navarre ſhe ſtood in need of freſh conceſſions with reſpect to the

queen Catharine is alarmed at their union;

* D'Avila, liv. ii.

regency,

regency, and was glad to borrow the aid of the Colignis to enable her to obtain the poſitive ſanction of the deputies to her authority*. The petition for liberty of ſeparate worſhip, which had been dropt in the laſt meeting of the ſtates, was now revived, and brought into the king's council. It was there deliberated upon, as a matter which highly concerned the peace of the kingdom. The argument was now endured by many, who formerly heard it with indignation. But the deciſion was protracted; while a deep alarm about the dangerous tendency of liberty of conſcience was ſounded by the zealous friends of the antient hierarchy.

and begins to favour the proteſtants;

THE late ſuſpenſion of inquiſitorial violence againſt the proſelytes of the reformed faith, and the connivance at their ſecret meetings, were attended with almoſt the whole inconveniencies that were feared, and lacked every advantage that might ariſe from a direct toleration of them by the authority of the ſtate. Unworthy as they were accounted of the protection of the laws, and ſtigmatized as outcaſts of civil government, the partial remiſſion of ſeverity tended rather to place them in a more obnoxious ſituation †. Their unlicenſed meetings, the multiplication of thoſe private aſſemblies, and the boldneſs of their preachers, became the more notorious. Many of their refugees had returned from foreign countries, full of the hope of enjoying religious liberty, and recovering their pillaged fortunes. Among thoſe adventurers a freſh ſupply of miniſters came, whoſe pulpit-talents and popular oratory drew vaſt crouds to their private conventicles. In many places the concourſe of people after them appearing to drain the antient church of her votaries, the cardinal of Lorain's zeal was moved, and he took the opportunity, while the court was at Rheims, to repreſent before

* Caſtel. liv. iii. chap. 3. † Caſtel. ibid. D'Avila. Thuan. ibid. p. 567.

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the council the disfigured aſpect of the public religion from the growing preſumption of heretics. The picture he gave of the prieſts frightened from the celebration of maſs; of the deriſion and contempt ſhewn to many of the pious ceremonies of the church; of the viſible deſertion of her altars; and of the new appetite of the people to hear her doctrines expoſed by argument and ridicule; confounded ſome, and ſtartled others, who deliberated on the ſubject of toleration. The lords of the council choſe to rid themſelves of the diſcuſſion of this critical point, and agreed to leave it to the judgment of the court of parliament. This propoſal was reliſhed by the Guiſes, from the perſuaſion that the majority of the members would reject the petition for religious liberty, and the oppoſite party was convinced, that without the concurrence of the parliament, the attempt to authorize it would be baffled. Though the late remonſtrance of that court diſcovered its adherence to the antient ſyſtem of zeal for the catholic church, yet on account of the diviſion of the adminiſtrators of the ſtate upon this queſtion, and the diſpoſition of many of them to favour the requeſt for toleration, there was ground to believe, that the ſparks of freedom, which had ſometimes glanced forth, would now be excited among the counſellors of parliament, and prompt them to aſſert thoſe liberal principles, which ſeveral of them were known to entertain. To add greater weight and ſolemnity to the judgment of the ſenators, it was agreed that the members of the council of ſtate and the peers ſhould attend, and in preſence of the king and queen regent, deliver their opinions upon the matter in queſtion.

and a motion for their toleration being made in the council,

the queſtion is brought to the parliament of Paris.

CHAP. II.

Origin and conſtitution of the parliament of Paris—Debates in it iſſue in the edict *of July—Eccleſiaſtical conference about religion agreed to by the court of parliament—Meeting of the ſtates at* Pontoiſe*—Convention of the catholic clergy and proteſtant divines at* Poiſſi*—Re-converſion of the king of Navarre—The faction of the triumvirate.*

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AFTER having traced, in the courſe of this hiſtory, the eſtabliſhment of the ſtates general, and that of the court of peers; the natural order of the hiſtory of the French government, as well as the remarkable appeal which was now made to the chambers of parliament in Paris, points out the propriety of inſerting here an account of this celebrated court of judicature. To diſcover its origin, we muſt look back to that period, in which the kings began to make alterations in the feudal government, by ſubverting the ſeignioral juriſdictions *. In France, more perhaps than in any other country, the number of thoſe independent juriſdictions of the fiefs and baronies, produced a great diverſity of uſages and cuſtoms in legal trials. The laws and cuſtoms, though ſimple in themſelves, varied in every province and great diſtrict of the kingdom; and the ignorance of the times, joined to the rudeneſs and peculiarity of the feudal maxims, excluded more extenſive ideas of political law, and prevented all general deciſions that might have led to them. But when St. Lewis, by the eſtabliſhment off our grand bailliwicks, within his own domains, but in different parts of the kingdom, had encouraged appeals to be

* L'Eſprit des Loix, liv. xxviii. chap. 45.

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brought to his courts, and gradually enlarged their juriſdiction; the procedure of his judges was adapted to new principles of law *. From the ſtudy of the Roman codes in the ſchools, and the tranſlation of Juſtinian's works into French, which he promoted, a body of inſtitutions was compiled, and a foundation laid for a great revolution in the maxims of juriſprudence and the cognizance of civil cauſes in the kingdom. On account of the number and variety of charters of infranchiſement granted to towns and villages, ſtipulations and exceptions were required to be made, for the framing of which the feudal judges were found altogether unqualified. In the general parliaments of the kingdom, in the court of peers, and in the aſſizes of the great lords, on account of the novelty of thoſe law-caſes, and the increaſe of appeals, the opinion and judgment of canoniſts and clerks were inceſſantly wanted. Hence † this claſs of men by degrees entered into the functions of judicature, and became conſtituent members of thoſe courts of juſtice, which were ſummoned by the kings, either for the determination of general feudal queſtions, or of private claims of right, upon different occaſions, and in various places of the kingdom. The ſecular peers and lords, whom they at firſt only aſſiſted with their advice, ſoon yielded to them the ſuperiority in thoſe tribunals; where, inſtead of the conciſeneſs and ſimplicity of the feudal forms of trial, and the martial pomp with which they preſided in their antient courts, the nice diſcuſſion of law-queſtions, and an attention to protracted pleadings, became the chief employment of the judges.

When ſuch innovations in the feudal conſtitution were effectuated, and the authority of thoſe courts, compoſed of ſome lords

* Ibid. chap. 42. † Boulainvilliers, lett. 6. Le Gendre, tom. i. p. 55.

and

and prelates, and ſecular lawyers, had been eſtabliſhed by cuſtom *; Philip-le-bel, in the beginning of the fourteenth century, fixed the ſeat or regular aſſizes of them in the city of Paris. As one chamber was inſufficient for the arrangement and diſpatch of proceſſes, another was formed by him, called the chamber of inqueſts; to which the judgment of diſputes that required the information of parties, and a formal courſe of evidence, was aſſigned. He appointed the two chambers to meet twice in the year, at the terms of All Saints and Eaſter; when their ſeſſions were continued for two months †. Under pretence of the paſtoral obligation of the biſhops to reſidence in their dioceſes, Philip-le-long diſpenſed with their attendance in the court of parliament. It appears that, at firſt, the counſellors and canoniſts of the parliament held their offices of the king; but not for life. Before the convention of every aſſize, they were nominated by him, or at leaſt it is ſaid, that the chancellor, three preſidents, and ten others of his council, preſented on oath a liſt to the king, of ſufficient perſons; out of which he made an election. It is doubtful how the ſeſſions of the parliament of Paris were continued without intermiſſion throughout the year. It is aſcribed by Paſquier to accident, and the ſtate of the kingdom in the unfortunate reign of Charles VI. ‡ when, without a ſpecial order, or a new roll of them being made up, the magiſtrates continued to hold their places and ſeſſions. The offices of the counſellors were eſtabliſhed for life by Charles VII; and the elections upon a vacancy were made by the court itſelf. The conſtituent members of the court of parliament, when the

* Les Recherches de la France par Paſquier, edit. fol. liv. 2. chap. 3. Henault, p. 182. Du Cange in voce Parlamentum.

† Paſquier, ibid. Boulainvilliers, lett. viii. Le Gendre, ibid. p. 56.

‡ Paſquier, ibid. L'Abbe de Mably, tom. ii. p. 203 and 414.

BOOK III. 1561. twelve peers of France were reckoned among them, amounted to a hundred; and they did not exceed that number till the reign of Francis I. who made the addition of twenty-eight. They * originally conſiſted of three preſidents; ſix maſters of requeſts; thirty counſellors of the grand chamber, one half of which were eccleſiaſtic, and the other ſecular lawyers; twenty-four counſellors of the chamber of inqueſts, of the clerical order; and ſeventeen laymen; and eight ſelect counſellors, five of them churchmen, and three of the laity; who compoſed a chamber for judging the cauſes relative to the rights of the palace, or the king's houſehold, and from whom an appeal to the grand chamber was competent.

THE perpetual aſſizes and extenſive juriſdiction of the parliament of Paris exalted its authority, and rivetted its influence in the ſtate. In a ſhort time it became a new graft of the political conſtitution of France, which adminiſtered ſupport to the monarchy itſelf, by being the repoſitory and interpreter of the laws and ſtatutes of the kingdom, and the guardian of the rights of the royalty. To it devolved the judicial power exerciſed by the antient general parliaments †. The court of peers, reſigning its ſeparate function of judgment, was blended with it; and the kings of France, by holding their beds of juſtice in this court, inveſted it with the ſupreme juriſdiction of the ſtate, both in civil and criminal affairs. Beſides the offices of judicature, the parliament of Paris aſſumed the important prerogative of regiſtering and verifying the ſovereign's edicts; by which its concurrence to the authenticity and confimation of the royal ordinances was tacitly, and by cuſtom, underſtood to be neceſſary. This grand point of privilege, together with that of remonſtrating to the king, the French courts

* Thuan. lib. xiii. p. 283. † Boulainvilliers, ibid.

of parliament have retained, and are at this day poſſeſſed of; when the aſſemblies of the ſtates-general are proſcribed, and the veſtiges of the antient power and dignity of the nobles can ſcarcely be diſcerned. But it may be accounted a ſingularity, ariſing from the notions of honour peculiar to the Gothic nations, that the counſellors of law were not ennobled by their place; when, being in a manner aſſociated with the peers of France, they exerciſed the higheſt and nobleſt office of government, that of diſpenſing juſtice in the ſupreme court of the kingdom *. They obtained indeed, upon their application, in the reign of Charles VII. the privilege of exemption from the tailles. But they enjoyed not this like the nobles, as a hereditary right; nor were they advanced by it to the rank of barons, or gentlemen in France. In vain did the court of parliament endeavour to ſupport the pretenſions of all its members to nobility, by ſome deciſions favourable to them. Not only the prevailing principles and cuſtoms of the monarchy, but the will and ſtatutes of ſome princes, forbid this uſurpation of dignity founded on birth. It was not till later times, in the reign of Lewis XIV. that the people of the long robe, who judged of life and property in the nation, were allowed the benefit of an edict, to entitle them to the privileges and honours of nobility. After the parliament of Paris was in this manner eſtabliſhed, ſeven other courts were erected, at different periods, upon a ſimilar plan, in ſome great cities, for the adminiſtration of juſtice in the provinces.

THE reſolution of the king's council to remit to the parliament of Paris the queſtion about the grant of the free exerciſe of their religion to the proteſtants, was deemed by many of the members a

* Boulainvilliers, lett. x.

vexatious

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vexatious buſineſs. The deſire of maintaining liberty of opinion and debate, and the fear of the conſequences that might attend it, threw them into perplexity. The † memory of the uſage they had once met with from the royal preſence, ſo far increaſed their conſternation, that they hardly credited the aſſurances which were given, that no advantages ſhould be taken at their freedom of judgment. In this agitation the difficult debate was propoſed in the grand chamber. The chancellor ſtated the point, by obſerving that the only ſubject of deliberation was, what method or remedy might, with moſt ſucceſs, and ſafety to the ſtate, be applied to compoſe and terminate the public commotions and diſorders that prevailed, on account of religious differences. The ingenuity and rhetoric of the ableſt counſellors of ſtate, and of the moſt intelligent members of parliament, were employed in the diſcuſſion of this argument, for ſeveral days ‡. There was a conſiderable variety of opinions; but the three following divided the generality of the judges. One party inſiſted, that the penal ſtatutes already in force againſt the ſchiſmatics and ſectaries ſhould be rigidly obſerved and executed. Another contended for the ſuſpenſion of them, until a general council ſhould meet and decide the controverted points of faith. And a third propoſed to refer the trial of all religious proceſſes to the eccleſiaſtical courts, and to declare it a capital offence to frequent public or private aſſemblies of worſhip according to the new profeſſion. As the grand diſpute of thoſe days about religious toleration was implied in the two firſt opinions, and the debate upon it confined to political reaſoning, we may ſuppoſe that the following arguments might be made uſe of on each ſide.

After much heſitation, the queſtion about toleration is debated in the parliament.

† Addit. aux Caſtel. liv. iii. chap. 3.

‡ Matthieu, ibid.

THE

THE advocates for the penal edicts would plead in ſupport of their ſtern maxims, that in a queſtion like this, which reſpected the vitals of regular government, the dictates of wiſe policy ought to direct the judgments of men, and be preferred to timid and weak expedients; that the hiſtory of all civilized ages and nations demonſtrated the truth of this political principle; that religion was the baſis of government, and proved the anchor of every ſtate; whence it followed, by juſt and neceſſary inference, that what is ſo eſſential to kingdoms, and all political eſtabliſhments, ought never to be altered or varied; and that the ties and obligations to allegiance, and ſubjection to public laws, civil obedience and ſubordination, would quickly loſe their authority and force, when the principles of the received ſyſtem of faith, interwoven with them, were challenged and controverted: That hence, in all governments, the penal terrors of the law were interpoſed to curb the audacious and dangerous arraignment of the public ſtandard of religion, as well as the contravention of the civil ſtatutes; that thoſe edicts, in themſelves neceſſary, and hitherto approved in the monarchy, were juſtified from the invincible obſtinacy, and rebellious inſolence, of the preſent ſchiſmatics, who daily dared to trample upon the authority of the ſtate; and while they made their lives a forfeiture to the laws by diſobedience, preſumed to requeſt the protection of them: That the tendency of their principles to looſe the bands of government, and encourage revolts againſt the regulations of it, was ſufficiently manifeſt by their ſeditious behaviour: That it being entirely inconſiſtent with the welfare of the ſtate, to allow ſuch incoherent and wayward meaſures to encumber the body politic, they ought to be ſubjected to the law of exciſion; that fundamental law of government, which

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prescribes the destruction of the parts, in order to promote the welfare of the whole: That the edicts vigorously executed, would work their effect, by crushing the contumacious, and constraining the tractable to yield to authority: That, as severity was the surest method to extinguish the threatening evil, so it would prove, upon the whole, the most salutary remedy; much future discord would be avoided, the seeds of distraction and internal broils be suppressed; and the monarchy freed from this counterpoise to the harmony of its constitution, be enabled to support itself with all its native power and grandeur.

Those who insisted for the repeal of the penal statutes, and maintained the cause of liberty, might reason in the following manner: —That to conceive and represent the political constitution of the kingdom to be so inveloped in the religious system, that every law and ordinance of the former, ought to be adjusted to the balance of the latter, was effectually to renounce all pretensions to civil policy, and to surrender the rights and rules of government to the hierarchy; that it was a general maxim in policy to establish no political or civil acts contradictory to the public tenets of religion; but that it was more agreeable to the prejudices and bigotry of the priesthood, than to the wisdom of statesmen, to infer from thence, that all questions about the religious system were equally momentous, and the civil statutes relative to it, alike invariable: That the question to be presently determined was, in what manner the government should proceed with respect to those who varied from the church in some particular points of faith and speculation, which could have no influence upon the ties and bonds of civil obedience: That implicit submission to ecclesiastical authority had induced the state to condemn, under capital penalties, an adherence

to thoſe abſtract and mental errors; but that the impoſſibility of enthralling the human mind, by the forgery of ſuch fetters, was manifeſt from the preſent neceſſity of reviewing this matter in the court of parliament: That thoſe edicts, in themſelves tyrannical, had, like all unnatural and violent efforts, both failed of their effect, and inflamed the maladies they meant to cure: That after a tedious experiment of their tendency to foment the propenſity to ſchiſm, and kindle the ſparks of religious apoſtacy, it was time to controul the execution of them, and to attempt to confirm men in the faith, by other methods than the exerciſe of cruelty, and the effuſion of blood: That if thoſe who erred in their religious tenets, proved irreconcileable to the church, they could never be juſtly pronounced incongruous members of the ſtate, and of civil government, ſince they ſhewed themſelves, no leſs than catholics, faithful and obedient ſubjects to ſovereign authority and to the laws, in various kingdoms and ſtates where they abounded: That to deprive them of the protection of the government, and to expoſe them to be the victims of ſanguinary edicts, might indeed be imagined the direct courſe to disjoin them from the ſtate, and convert them into domeſtic enemies: That ever dreadful it was, to think of applying the law of extirpation to a multitude in a nation, but that to talk of it in the preſent caſe was outrageous and deſperate to the laſt degree; when the ſentence would infer the demolition of entire cities, and the depopulation of whole provinces; and when, by ſtriking the pernicious blow, and in ſuſtaining the violent ſhock, the monarchy, weak and divided as it now was, might be reduced to ruin: That no calculation, or proſpect of future advantage and elevation to the ſtate, from religious unanimity, could juſtify this dangerous riſque of the national ſafety, and that ſuch political theory, with reſpect to the grandeur of the

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kingdom, merited no regard, when there was a queſtion about the method of preſerving it from immediate peril and confuſion.

And iſſues in the edict of July,

After long and warm debates on the argument, the majority of votes in the parliament appeared to be in favour of the third general opinion. Altercation did not altogether ceaſe. It was † alledged that the clerk du Tillet had committed an abuſe contrary to the form and rule of the court, by marking the votes of thoſe who were abſent in the beginning of the diſpute. At laſt a decree was formed, which included, with ſome variations, the ſubſtance of that reſolution, and was termed the edict of July. By it all violent contentions and reproaches, on account of religion, were prohibited; ſeditious and inflammatory ſermons in the churches, tumultuous aſſemblies of the populace, and the adminiſtration of any other religious rites, either in public or private meetings, than thoſe of the Roman and apoſtolic church, were declared capital crimes, and the judgment of them left to the preſidial courts in the provinces. The trials of hereſy were conſigned to the eccleſiaſtical tribunals; but the power of puniſhing the convicts remained with the ſecular magiſtrates, who were reſtricted to pronounce no higher ſentence than baniſhment. It concluded with an amneſty for all paſt offences, and with menacing falſe informers with the ſevereſt penalties of law.

which, tho' unfavourable to the proteſtants, does not hinder a conference about religion to be agreed upon.

It may juſtly appear ſurprizing, and almoſt inexplicable from the diſplay that yet hath been given, of the deſigns and character of the parties at court, that the parliament of Paris, after pronouncing this ſolemn judgment, which demoliſhed the hopes, and ſtigmatized the principles of the proteſtants, ſhould almoſt at the

† Thuan. ibid. D'Avila.

ſame

same instant, agree to a resolution for a conference between the catholic divines, and the ministers of the reformed profession *. Yet these opposite determinations had at this time the approbation of the courtiers, and the sanction of the parliament. This phenomenon may be considered in a general political view, as the contrast of the genius of the government to the necessities of the state, which at this time pulled different ways, the one towards the rigorous exercise of authority, and the other towards moderation and indulgence. When viewed through the perspective of the cabinet policy, and in connexion with the artificial movements of the parties, it discovers the strong impression which the combination of the constable and the Guises made on the queen regent, and her dread that the catholic party, thus reinforced, would bear down the scale of power against her, and annihilate her authority, while it marks no less her bold genius to encounter this assault by a resource that a mind addicted to timidity, or affected by prejudices, was incapable of employing. It is plain that she had not only in view at this critical juncture, the gaining over the king of Navarre, and engaging the Colignis and their adherents, to support the acknowledgement of her title to the regency in the meeting of the states; but that she was determined with more earnestness than ever, to throw the weight of her influence on the weaker side; and for the preservation of her authority, to confide in those, who, from their apparent inferiority, were most likely to adhere to her interest. Placed in this situation, and impelled by such motives, the gratification of the leaders of the protestants was a desirable and important object to queen Catharine. The proposal of a conference with the protestant ministers, upon the disputed articles of

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* D'Avila, ibid.

faith,

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faith, had no ſuch ſtrange and odious ſound at court, as might be imagined from the judgment of the parliament. Examples of it had been ſet in ſome catholic ſtates; and it was indeed conformable * to the inquiſitive, and controverſial ſpirit of the age, which the reformers had excited. It appeared to anſwer the frequent demands of a national council by the ſtates; and the firſt motion of it in the council is ſaid to have been agreed to by the cardinal of Lorain, on purpoſe to divert that project, to which he knew the court of Rome had the greateſt averſion. In the midſt of tumults and diſorders in the kingdom, it ſeemed to promiſe at leaſt a temporal calm. The diſdainful zealots of the catholic party who oppoſed it, would be accounted enemies to peace, and the public tranquillity; a great expectation of the eſtabliſhment of which would be formed, when the ſcheme of the interview appeared to proceed from the court. In this manner queen Catharine found a facility in bringing about a very ſingular meaſure, which diſmayed the Roman Pontiff, rendered her propenſity to converſion credible among the Calviniſtical party; and ſhewed a myſtery in her conduct, which even thoſe who aſſented to her project could not fully penetrate. When the cardinal of Lorain ſpoke in favour of it, the clamour of ſome of his clerical brethren were ſilenced, and the memorable conference was immediately appointed to be held in Auguſt, at Poiſſi, a town only three leagues diſtant from St. Germain; and an order prepared for granting a ſafe conduct to the proteſtant miniſters who ſhould attend it.

And aſſented to by the cardinal of Lorain.

In the reconcilement of the prince of Condé and the duke of Guiſe, which about this time was managed at court by the king's

* Matthieu, ibid. p. 245.

order,

order, we may discern the influence of the feudal principles and manners which still prevailed, and in certain cases, formed a kind of supplement to the precarious authority of the laws. What was now transacted in the presence of the king and queen regent, may be reckoned a counterpart to the former defiance which the prince of Condé offered in a public manner, to all who should impeach his loyalty and honour *. On a set day the friends of both were invited to attend the court, where the king, according to concert, directing his discourse to the queen mother, said, "that the present meeting had been appointed by him, to adjust the dissention which subsisted betwixt the prince of Condé and the duke of Guise, who, he trusted, were now disposed, from deference to him, and regard to public peace, to forget their animosities to each other." The duke was then commanded by him, to make his declaration of the case to the prince. He said, "he would obey;" and after addressing himself to Condé, protested, "that he neither had been the instigator nor adviser of his incarceration." The prince returned his salutation, and replied, "that he accounted the author or counsellor of that assault, to be an ignominious poltron." To this Guise made answer, "that he also thought the same; but that this reflexion did not touch his honour." Upon this they embraced, and promised to behave to each other for the future like cordial friends. A memorial of the agreement was wrote, and subscribed by two of the king's secretaries, and the court celebrated it by a festive entertainment. By the prince of Condé's facility in this † accommodation, the constable who projected it, had the desired opportunity of engaging himself without reserve, in his cabal with the Guises, and the rigid catholicks.

* Thuan. ibid. p. 568. Matthieu, ibid. † D'Aubigne, ibid. chap. 25.

THE

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The delegates of the ſtates meet at Pontoiſe;

THE convention of the ſtates at Pontoiſe, that now took place, ſhewed the juſt ground there was to fear the oppoſition which might be made to the model of the adminiſtration; and that if the political courſe queen Catharine took was unneceſſary to be purſued all the length ſhe went, at leaſt conſiderable allowances and conceſſions ought to be granted to the party ſupported by the firſt princes of the blood; and even favoured by the ſpirit awakened in many people, for ſhaking off religious tyranny and perſecution. Though the point of the regency was known and declared to be fixed by the king of Navarre's conſent, the deputies were obſtinate in refuſing to quit the conſideration of that queſtion. The intreaties of that prince, ſeconded by the influence and perſuaſions of the admiral Coligni, hardly prevailed upon them to ratify his renunciation of it in favour of the queen mother * by their authority. When this grand difficulty was ſurmounted, and the meeting of the ſtates, transferred to St. Germain, was opened with the cuſtomary forms, in preſence of the king and queen regent; a ſimilar diſpoſition to enter into the detail of government, to trace diſorders and abuſes to their ſource, and to provide for the redreſs of them by proper ordinances, appeared to animate their procedure. The harangues of the repreſentatives of the third order, and of the nobility which nearly approached to one ſtrain, proved that many enormities and exceſſes in government, prominent to the public view, and generally confeſſed, might be enumerated upon an attentive ſcrutiny of the political ſyſtem: while rooted deeply, and rendered concentric to the movements of the ſtate, a conſiderable part of ſuch irregularities cannot be exploded, without the concurrence of auſpicious circumſtances that rarely caſt up in the

and, after quitting with difficulty the queſtion about the regency,

* Matthieu, ibid.

admini-

adminiſtration of great kingdoms. By the tenor of their reſolutions, the ſtates propoſed the redreſs of various abuſes, which embaraſſed the political, and injured the civil government of the nation. The deliverance of the treaſury from vaſt debts, by the revocation of former largeſſes of the finances, and the proper means of preſerving the revenue, and the abolition of the ſale of the offices of judicature, were ſome of the points that occupied their attention *. But with the utmoſt keenneſs was the church aſſaulted; her exorbitant wealth weighed, and the ſuperfluity of her revenues condemned. It was projected to enrich the crown by the circumciſion of the benefices: that thoſe of five hundred livres value ſhould be diminiſhed a fourth part; thoſe of a thouſand, a third; and of three thouſand, a half; and the higher ones in a greater proportion. By a calculation formed of the revenues, and lands belonging to the various monaſteries, their value was reckoned to amount to a hundred and twenty millions of livres; one third of which groſs ſum, they ſuppoſed, was enough to produce an annual intereſt in money, ſufficient for the maintainance of the religious orders, and that the remainder would at once diſcharge all the debts of the crown. When ſuch reſolutions were ſuppoſed by the deputies, we may judge that the majority of them were not warmly affected to the intereſt of the catholic church. They inſiſted for annulling the edict of July, for the permiſſion of religious worſhip to the Calviniſts and Lutherans; and for the convocation of a national council †; and what a late French writer ſays, may eternize the memory of the ſtates of Pontoiſe; a foundation was laid for completing the diſtinction between the robe of juſtice and the ſword, and ſeparating the civil and military profeſſions. The juriſdictions exer-

The ſpeakers for the nobles and the third order uſe invectives againſt the clergy;

and arguments for eccleſiaſtical and civil reformations.

* Thuan. ibid.

† Voltaire, Hiſt. d'Europe. Henault, p. 330.

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ciſed by the clergy, as poſſeſſors of fiefs, which claſhed with thoſe of the nobility, and produced endleſs litigations, were alſo wholly abrogated. It ſeemed the bent of the court, and the preſent humour of many of the nobles, to abandon the church to thoſe humiliating blows. But the clerical order ſaw their danger, and wiſely prevented the ravage of their livings, by a voluntary offer of four tenths out of them to the king for ſix years; which redemption was accepted.

Queen Catharine imitates the procedure of the ſtates;

THE queen regent being confirmed in her authority by the ſtates, adopted their tone with reſpect to the church, and preſcribed rules with as much boldneſs in religious points to the Roman pontiff, as they did in temporalities to the clergy of the kingdom. It ſcarce falls within the reach of conjecture, much leſs of poſitive judgment, to determine how far ſhe meant to attach herſelf to the party of the proteſtants *. Catholic hiſtorians ſcruple not to affirm, that ſhe, at this time, verged towards hereſy, and even that ſhe had promiſed to the admiral to declare herſelf a Calviniſt. Her epiſtle to Pius IV. is an enigma that may bear this interpretation of her purpoſes. But her ambiguous character overthrows the certainty of this, or any ſuch affirmation, with reſpect either to her political or religious ſincerity. It is manifeſt, that ſhe could not eaſily have contrived a more ſuitable prelude to apoſtaſy from the faith than this miſſive to his holineſs; which † contained an apology and ſpecious arguments for all the material articles of the proteſtant creed, at a time when ſummoning a council of the clergy in France was the topic of the court and of the ſtates; and when the reſolution of admitting the proteſtant

and by her behaviour aſtoniſhes the the pope and other catholic courts.

* Addit. aux Caſtel. liv. i. p. 284. Boſſuet, Hiſt. de Charles IX.

† D'Aubigne, chap. 27.

miniſters

miniſters to a public audience was actually taken. The pope was amazed and exaſperated; and the French ambaſſador at Rome could find no proper gloſs or colouring for her conduct. The addreſs ſhe uſed in the buſineſs might well redouble ſuſpicion *. She gave the intended conference the name of an aſſembly of the prelates of the kingdom, to prepare matters for the expected general council. She prevented the arrival of early and diſtinct intelligence at Rome, by ſtopping the couriers on the frontier of Italy, and ſeizing all the diſpatches they carried. The ſolicitude of Pius IV. and of the catholic king to traverſe her project, ſhewed that her ſecret was not imparted to them. After all, perhaps it is credible, that ſhe made ſuch ſtretches to promote the congreſs at Poiſſi from a real perſuaſion that it might contribute to abate the religious contentions, and procure tranquillity to the kingdom.

To attempt the determination of diſputes about religion, by calling the divines of either party to an interview, had many precedents in that age, which were afterwards repeated. The emperor Charles V. twenty years before had tried this meaſure, in the famous conference at Ratiſbon. In England there had been a multiplicity of thoſe diſputations. Even Francis I. is ſaid to have entertained thoughts of making the theologiſts of the catholic church and their opponents produce their arguments upon their different tenets before him. The ſpirit of logical controverſy had long preſided in the ſeminaries of literature, and the faculty of diſpute, according to the ſcholaſtic modes, conſtituted almoſt the whole ſcience and philoſophy of the times. The aſſembly appointed at

* Addit. aux Caſtel. ibid. chap. 4.

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Poiſſi could not therefore be deemed a novelty ſo repugnant to the genius of the theological ſyſtem, as it ſeemed to reverſe the maxims hitherto purſued by the French government *. Truſting to the ſtability of theſe principles, and diſdaining to be matched with antagoniſts, whom they accounted in all reſpects their inferiors, many of the catholic prelates and doctors diſcovered their averſion to this new enterprize; and after ſome remonſtance, moved ſlowly and with reluctance to the place of rendezvous. They aſſembled, however, to the number of forty biſhops and prelates, beſides cardinals, and ſeveral doctors of the Sorbonne at Paris; of whom the moſt noted ſpeakers were d'Eſpenſe and de Saintes. Whilſt, from the end of July, they expected the appearance of the proteſtant miniſters, propoſals were made, and much inſiſted upon among them, to reſtrict the arguments of the congreſs to the exterior regulations and diſcipline of the church †. They began to engage themſelves in this eluſive combat, and prolong their debates about the proper functions of biſhops, the dignity of cathedral churches, the privileges and exemptions of collegiate ones, the ordination of deacons, and the ſtatutes of monaſteries; and to think that their diſcants upon thoſe points might be ſubſtituted in the room of the queſtions in diſpute with the proteſtants. But the cardinal of Lorain, the biſhops of Valence and of Sees, and others of the order, ſhewed an eager deſire to launch into the main grounds of controverſy. As the conference took its riſe in a great meaſure from the cardinal's own motion, he appeared paſſionately fond of the encounter. Vain of his elocution, he eaſily imagined he would confound, if he did not convince the adverſaries of the church, and it was his foible to take the lead, and truſt his perſonal abilities in every performance. In September, twelve pro-

The catholic prelates aſſemble to hold the conference of Poiſſi, Aug. 1561.

which is attended by twelve proteſtant miniſters;

* Matthieu, ibid. p. 247.

† Thuan. lib. xxviii. p. 571.

teſtant

teſtant miniſters, attended by ſeveral doctors of divinity, and ſome deputies of their communion, arrived. Theodore de Beza, Peter Martyr, Malo, Marlorat, de St. Paul, de l'Eſpine, were the chief perſonages among them. After ſome preliminary articles were adjuſted, the aſſembly was opened in the grand refectory of the abbey of Poiſſi. The king, the queen regent, and the princes of the blood took their places, with the ſolemnities uſual at the meeting of the ſtates general. Where the ſubject of harangues is a ſeries of various controverſies of the metaphyſical kind, the detail of them cannot form an intereſting page of hiſtory. It will be ſufficient to relate ſome particular paſſages of them, which are connected with the moſt curious incidents of the conference.

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Sept. 9.

AFTER the young king had given a ſpecimen of his elocution, the chancellor enlarged upon the deſign and uſefulneſs of that aſſembly *. He ſaid, that it was the proper office of royalty to watch over the peace of the church and ſtate; that national councils were beſt adapted to regulate national diſſenſions; that to uſe violence in matters of conſcience, when there was the leaſt hope of reclaiming men from their errors by rational perſuaſion, tended only to rankle their minds and harden their obſtinacy; and that, in the preſent caſe, the ſacred ſcriptures could be appealed to as the great and only neceſſary ſource of conviction. The cardinal of Tournon had all along teſtified his diſſatisfaction with the propoſed conference. His rank as archbiſhop of Lions and primate of the kingdom, concurred with the rigid caſt of his principles and temper to render him more indignant and ſupercilious. Impreſſed with high notions of the dignity of the church, he hardly endured to behold her now deſcending from it, to enter into a parley with

and opened by a ſpeech from the king and the chancellor.

* D'Aubigne, ibid. chap. 27. Matthieu, ibid. p. 246.

thoſe

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those who, as presumptuous opponents of her doctrines, ought to be anathematized, and ever stand abashed in her presence. Apprehensive her adversaries might acquire renown, and claim a triumph from the present condescension, he had tried his utmost endeavours to prevent the congress; and, with a view to interrupt it, he proposed now that the chancellor should give an extract in writing of the heads of his speech, and of the religious questions he desired to be treated, that the clergy might have leisure to consider them. De l'Hospital, perceiving that this might afford a handle for dissension, and that an injurious use might be made of such a written memorial, peremptorily refused to comply with this captious demand; which, after some argument, was given up, and the conference proceeded by an order to Beza to speak.

A character of Beza, who is ordered to speak:

He was a Frenchman, of a reputable family in Burgundy. His endowments, both natural and acquired, ranked him in the first class of the learned of that age. The favourite disciple of Calvin, with the character of the man and the scholar, less absorbed in that of the systematic divine; he had a more extensive and less nervous genius, which was calculated to support and disseminate, rather than to prescribe the theological tenets of his party. To remarkable eloquence he joined address and presence of mind. Solicitous to answer the expectation of the protestants, by a just and zealous defence of their principles, and stimulated with the ardour of debate, he sustained this trial of his genius and temper with great reputation; and justified, by his appearance, the general opinion entertained of him, as well qualified to perform his part in such a critical scene.

His introductory prayer surprizes the audience;

Beza's first motion surprized the audience. After obeizance to the king, he fell upon his knees, and uttered * in French a prayer

* D'Aubigne, ibid. Thuan. ibid.

to

to God. Such a form of religious ſupplication was a novelty to people accuſtomed to the ritual of the catholic church. Latin ſentences repeated from their breviaries, were the only prayers known among them; which it was common to mutter in the midſt of buſineſs and on trivial occaſions. The reformers, who introduced another ſtyle of prayer in the vulgar languages, enjoined the uſe of pious invocations of God, previous to all important and ſolemn tranſactions. Prejudice or unjuſt partiality could only have induced a proteſtant writer to have called the ſerious pronunciation of the prayers of the breviary upon this occaſion, by any one of the catholic clergy, a farce: yet Beza's devotion is ſtigmatized with this name by ſeveral catholic authors. He introduced his diſcourſe by complaining of the hard fate of thoſe of his profeſſion; who, from inveterate prejudices, were aſperſed at court, and in the ſenates of the kingdom, as inſtigators of ſedition, and confounded with the anabaptiſts and other ſects of enthuſiaſts and libertines, whoſe tenets they abhorred. He enumerated the various articles of faith in which they agreed with the church of Rome, and the particular points in which they differed from her. He endeavoured to ſhew, that thoſe laſt were neither founded in the ſcripture, nor extracted from the primitive creeds of the chriſtian church. He entered into the diſcuſſion of the authority which general councils and the fathers of the church might duly claim. He commented upon the more abſtracted points of the ſatisfaction for ſin; of the efficacy of grace, and the merit of good works, and carried the attention and even the admiration of a great part of the aſſembly along with him, until the utterance of one ſentence, on the ſubject of the euchariſt, provoked the zeal of all his catholic auditors. In arguing againſt the real preſence, he ſaid, "that Chriſt's body was as far removed from the bread and the wine, as heaven is diſtant from the earth." In

and an expreſſion uſed by him about the ſacrament inceníes the catholics.

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ſpeaking to a croud of illiterate people, who are apt to attend to words more than to the ideas explained by them, it may be a proper rule of oratory, to avoid expreſſing, by a ſtriking compariſon, the doctrine which contradicts their opinions, and to endeavour to lead them to the conception of the ſentiment, without ſcaring them with words. But ſurely Beza may be excuſed for not obſerving this caution, when in an aſſembly of the chief prelates of France, who certainly could be at no loſs to underſtand whether his figurative and his literal explication was one and the ſame; he made uſe of an expreſſion with reſpect to the corporal preſence, which implied no more than what the common doctrine and belief of the proteſtants amounted to. Scarcely, however, could they ſit to hear the concluſion of his ſpeech; which he finiſhed by preſenting to the king a copy of the religious confeſſion and principles of the French proteſtant churches.

The cardinal of Tournon ſhews himſelf provoked, and inveighs againſt the congreſs.

THE ſigns of anger and paſſion diſcovered themſelves in the face and accents of the cardinal of Tournon, who now directed his ſpeech to the king*. It was evident, he ſaid, when now the ears of the whole aſſembly were ſhocked, what was the effect of giving audience to thoſe new evangeliſts. He declared that the clergy did violence to their conſciences, as well as affronted their dignity, by being obliged to hear their blaſphemies; that deference to his majeſty had alone prevented them from teſtifying their juſt indignation, by an immediate retreat from a conference to which moſt of them had ſhewed their averſion. His reflexions were ſuch as obliged the queen regent to tell him in reply, that he ought to remember that the king's council and the court of parliament had interpoſed their authority for the preſent meaſure, and that it became every

* Thuan. ibid.

one

one to acquieſce in it, who regarded the great object of the national peace. The conference being adjourned, Beza, whoſe ſimile for illuſtrating the doctrine of his party upon the ſacrament was ſo much exclaimed againſt, ſent a letter to the queen, which ſhewed he wanted neither moderation nor complaiſance. He did not inſiſt upon the juſtification of his expreſſions, but explained the proteſtant principle about the Euchariſt in terms which were intelligible and plain, without being offenſive or equivocal. Father Daniel and Mezerai have conſtructed this letter in an ungenerous way; the * one taking occaſion from it to aſſert, that he repented of having ſo manifeſtly diſcloſed his hereſy; and the other, that he was aſhamed of what he had uttered. But theſe aſſeverations are grounded neither on the explicatory article of the letter, nor on any other circumſtance which they preſume to report. From the ſlighteſt reflexion it is evident, that Beza might have an inducement different from either of thoſe ſuppoſed motives, for penning ſuch a letter. A plain and probable one is aſſigned by him in it, which was the falſe interpretation put upon his expreſſions, as if they had ſignified that Chriſt was not, in any ſenſe, to be found in the ſacrament. But uncandid judgment may ſoon miſinterpret an innocent facility.

BEFORE the next meeting it was agreed among the catholic divines, to reſtrict the future diſputations to two points; that of the authority of the church, and of the real preſence: and it was then the cardinal of Lorain had the occaſion he ſo much longed for, of ſignalizing his rhetorical talents. The introductory part of his premeditated harangue, in which he aſſerted the doctrine of the ſpiritual ſubjection of kings to the church and her miniſters, who

Speech of the cardinal of Lorain at the next meeting.

* P. Dan. tom. v. p. 720. Mezer. Abbr. tom. vi. p. 84.

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in all points of faith and doctrine held the ſupremacy, had no reference to any thing advanced by Beza, but was intended as an orthodox correction of what the chancellor had delivered, about the privilege of chriſtian princes to call and preſide in the councils of the church. The cardinal declared, that the legitimate convocation of them belonged to the apoſtolic ſee of Rome; and that, if, in certain caſes, kings aſſembled them, they were ſtill to be conſidered as ſubordinate members of the church, who could not aſſume the office of the ſpiritual head of the chriſtian body. As he ſtuck in this point to the higheſt ſtrain of the catholic ſyſtem, ſo he avowed his inflexible adherence to the doctrine of the church with reſpect to the Euchariſt; upon which, if the proteſtants would not alter their ſentiments and language, he thought that all attempts to be at peace with them ought to be laid aſide*. The cardinal of Tournon and his adherents ſtood up, and after declaring their readineſs to ſeal the truth of the catholic doctrines with their blood, prayed the king to inſiſt, that the proteſtant miniſters ſhould either ſign the article about the maſs, or be diſmiſſed from the conference. Beza begged leave to reply directly to the cardinal of Lorain's ſpeech; but the diet of conference being broke up, the honour and complacence that prelate had in the appearance he now made, remained undiminiſhed with him.

Sept. 22. 1561.

The queen regent turns the conference into a more private diſputation.

The place and form of the conference were now changed. The queen regent apprehended the growing diſpleaſure of the prelates, and ſaw that the proſpect of concord became more diſtant than at the beginning. The public ſcene of interview was now reſolved into a more private diſputation; at which the twelve proteſtant miniſters, oppoſed to a particular number of catholic doctors, and

* Matthieu, ibid. D'Aubigne, ibid.

five cardinals, attended. In one of thoſe meetings, Beza took occaſion, in anſwering the objections made to the miſſion of the proteſtant miniſters, to expoſe the abuſes of the paſtoral function, and condemn the prevailing proſtitution of it by ſimony and other corrupt arts. The cardinal of Lorain appeared to feel the charge; and, in replying to it with vehemence and reſentment, exhauſted both his ſpirits and rhetoric. But in this extremity he had recourſe to a particular battery, which he had dreſſed for the adverſaries of the church, and in which he ſeems to have placed his hope of their public confuſion, as well as in his eloquence. This conſiſted in a requiſition to them to ſign the article of the Auſbourg or Lutheran confeſſion of faith about the ſacrament. As this touched the jarring hinge of controverſy between the Calviniſts and Lutherans, and expoſed their diſunion, which was then as much as poſſible concealed, it was indeed the beſt device which the cardinal could invent for diſcomfiting the proteſtant miniſters. The attack was not, however, ſo advantageouſly made as it might have been. The Lutheran miniſters, who were expected at Poiſſi, and whom he hoped to employ as auxiliaries, were yet advanced no further than Paris. Tho' hard puſhed, Beza wanted not a reply. He aſked in his turn, "if the cardinal was willing to ſubſcribe to the article; and whether this was his own private motion, or if he made it in name of all the catholic prelates? If the whole of them who were preſent conſented to this propoſal as the term of union, he thanked God, he ſaid, that they would then have done with tranſubſtantiation." It appears that this propoſition, for the Auſbourg confeſſion being ſigned by the French miniſters, was not intended for mere altercation. There was *, undoubtedly, a much higher

An artful and puzzling queſtion is evaded by Beza.

* Thuan. ibid. p. 576.

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purpoſe in it, from the original ſcheme of the conference. The cardinal of Lorain himſelf was not ignorant that thoſe among the leading men, who may be called the moderate party, hoped to mitigate the violence of the bigotted catholics againſt the proteſtants, by engaging the latter to approach nearer the former, eſpecially upon the fundamental and popular tenet of the maſs. Indeed he himſelf was believed to have been * a conſubſtantialiſt or Lutheran in that point, and to have aſſented to what the chancellor, and Monluc biſhop of Valence, and the Colignis, with the concurrence of the queen regent and the king of Navarre, projected from the congreſs. But the cardinal was too vain and ambitious to be ſincere and ſteady. From his conceit, or overbearing temper, he forſook the way to concord, and inſiſted, in a dogmatical and imperious tone, for an immediate renunciation of their ſacramental tenet, by Beza and his aſſociates. He afterwards was political enough to avail himſelf of the propenſity he now ſhewed for favouring the Auſbourg confeſſion, when he deſired to court the proteſtant princes of Germany.

The pope's legate arrives at Poiſſi;

BY this time the court of Rome, which dreaded the conference, had put its ſpiritual machinery in motion to obſtruct it; Hypolite d'Eſt, cardinal of Ferrara, ſent with legatine powers from Pius IV. being arrived at Poiſſi. This high commiſſion, joined to his own rank, and his near affinity to the duke of Guiſe, did not, at this juncture, prevent his being the object of ſome inſults and ſatirical attacks †. The regiſtration of the pontifical mandate by the court of parliament was at firſt refuſed. The chancellor alledged, that it was inconſiſtent with a late order of the ſtates, which forbad all

* Caſtelnau, liv. iii. chap. 4.

† D'Aubigne, ibid. chap. 25.

collations

collations to benefices by bulls from Rome, and that claims to these were reserved in the commiſſion. His importunity and perſonal favour ſurmounted this objection; but the chancellor inſerted his diſſent from the meaſure. In this, as well as in other parts of his conduct, d'Eſt ſhewed his prudent diſpoſition to execute the purpoſe of his miſſion, without diſplaying offenſively the enſigns of his apoſtolic power. He took care not to appear at Poiſſi until the conferences became more private, and then he ſought no occaſion to aſſume his public character *. Le Laboureur alledges, that for this pacific behaviour he had eight ſubſtantial reaſons, which were eight rich abbeys he enjoyed in France. He failed not, however, to ſupply the want of boldneſs by circumſpection and art; and the ſucceſs of his intrigues with the king of Navarre, proved his ability to accompliſh his political aims without open contention. Laynez, general of the jeſuits, who attended d'Eſt, acted the papal zealot for him. He threw himſelf into the conferences; and, in the ſpeech he made, not only beſtowed the ſcurrilous names of apes, foxes, and monſters, on the proteſtant miniſters, but challenged the queen regent for uſurping the apoſtolic prerogative of aſſembling councils about matters of faith. The queen was provoked, and reſtrained only, by reſpect to the legate, from repreſſing his arrogance; but, ſays father Daniel, the pope and all true catholics made encomiums on his intrepid zeal.

and conducts himſelf with prudence.

BESIDES, that the conference was deemed a preſumptuous invaſion of the pontifical authority, and expoſed the articles of the catholic faith to a dangerous diſcuſſion; the court of Rome had a particular reaſon to uſe ſtrenuous endeavours for the diſſolution of it. The view which the moderate party in France had, of engag-

The hopes entertained from the conference by the moderate party being adopted by Catherine.

* Addit. aux Caſtel. liv. iii. chap. 4.

ing,

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ing the proteſtant miniſters to adopt the Lutheran creed, was alarming *. If, agreeable to the wiſhes of the chancellor and other leading men, this fruit had been produced from the interview, it is certain that the revolt from the ſpiritual domination of Rome would have proceeded to a far greater height in France. What the cardinal of Lorain now urged, from peculiar motives of his own, coincided with their ſcheme for promoting union, and the concert, about inviting ſome doctors of theology and miniſters of the Lutheran profeſſion to the colloquy, from the Palatinate and the dutchy of Wirtemberg. This deſign, mentioned by de Thou, and apparent from ſeveral circumſtances, explains the queen regent's earneſt deſire and final effort to extract ſome conceſſions from the clergy on both ſides, eſpecially on the grand controverſy about the ſacrament. For which purpoſe ſhe appointed another more private committee of the divines, and choſe thoſe repreſentatives of the catholics and proteſtants who were known to be moſt inclined to moderation and concord. Of the former the delegates were, Monluc biſhop of Valence, du Val biſhop of Seez, with the doctors Boutiller, Salignac, and d'Eſpence; and of the latter, Beza, Martyr, Marlorat, des Gallardes, and l'Eſpina. Having ſuſpended vague declamation, and applied themſelves to ſketch out in writing a formula of faith about the Euchariſt; they at length agreed upon one, which, as ſatisfactory to both parties, was approved and ſubſcribed by them. To gain one ſtep to agreement was a rarity to be ſeen in the liſts of theological controverſy; and it was the more remarkable, for having taken place now, on a very critical ſubject, between the champions of two ſuch oppoſite ſects as the catholics and Calviniſts †. When the queen regent received

ſhe is engaged to prolong it;

* Thuan. lib. xxviii. p. 585.

† D'Aubigne, ibid. chap. 26.

a copy

a copy of the adjuſted article, ſhe expreſſed the higheſt joy. The courtiers, and prelates, and miniſters, congratulated one another upon this pledge of agreement. The dawn of peace was momentary. Upon the review of the article by the catholic faculty of theology, it was pronounced captious, erroneous and heretical. The cardinal of Tournon, with his party, exclaimed againſt it. The zealous ſpirit was communicated to the majority of the clerical order in the aſſembly; at the general meeting of which it was required, that a more diſtinct and unambiguous admiſſion of the catholic doctrine ſhould be agreed to by the proteſtant miniſters. The terms of an article to this purpoſe were dictated, and a reſolution taken to refuſe all farther conference, in caſe objections were made by them againſt a compliance. The celebrated congreſs of Poiſſi being concluded in this manner, it was manifeſt with how little reaſon the rigid catholics had dreaded the reſult of the theological diſputes of ſuch an aſſembly.

1561. and is flattered with the appearance of an agreement about the ſacrament, which does not take place.

Though, by this iſſue of the conference, all religious differences were left on their original footing, yet ſeveral important conſequences followed from this meaſure. The diſpleaſure which the king of Spain affected to entertain and teſtify with reſpect to it, equalled the indignation of the court of Rome. Scarcely would he deign to hear an apology made for it by two ambaſſadors ſent on purpoſe by the queen regent. He remitted them to the duke of Alva for a reſponſe upon that head, whoſe language diſcovered the diſpoſition of his maſter to take advantage of the unſettled ſtate of the kingdom, by declaring himſelf the protector of the catholic church in France. Upon their return from * Spain, they confirmed

Oct. 1561. The catholic king expreſſes his diſguſt with the conference of Poiſſi;

* Thuan. p. 577.

the

Book III. 1561. the ſuſpicions the court had of ſecret intrigues carried on by ſome of the French nobility and clergy, for obtaining aid and redreſs from Philip. It became manifeſt that the prieſt, who had been apprehended near Orleans on his way to Spain with a paper wrote in form of a petition to the catholic king, had received inſtructions to promote this combination. The parliament of Paris found it improper to unravel the whole ſcene of the treaſon; and, after adviſing with the queen regent, finiſhed their cognizance of it, by ſentencing the ghoſtly emiſſary to appear before them with his head and feet bare, and a torch in his hand, to perform the *amende honorable*, and to be afterwards ſhut up in the monaſtery of the Carthuſians. The apprehenſions of the government at this juncture, alſo induced that court to check the indecent and licentious diſputations in the college of the Sorbonne. One of the candidates for the degree of batchelor had been allowed to maintain, in a public theſis, that the prerogative of the pope, the vicegerent of Chriſt, included both ſpiritual and temporal authority, and inferred the power of depriving kings of their crowns, when the holy father judged them unworthy to wear them. The audacious diſputant having abſconded, the parliament ordered a penitential ſubmiſſion to be made for him, before ſome of the delegates of their body, by one of the faculty, in preſence of the dean, the doctors, and ſtudents, who, in caſe of diſobedience, were threatened with the forfeiture of their privileges.

Dec. 11. 1561. which is followed by the re-converſion of the king of Navarre to the catholic faith; But the revolt of the king of Navarre from his connexions with the proteſtant party was a ſequel of the conference, which had the moſt direct and ſignal influence upon the political ſtate of the court and government of France. He is ſaid, by ſeveral catholic hiſtorians, to have been diſguſted with the diſagreement between the

the Lutherans and Calviniſts, which he hitherto imagined would be eaſily accommodated. But it is to the force of political and not of religious conſiderations that his converſion ought to be aſcribed. In thoſe days, as well as in later times, the predominancy of the religious principle often yielded to other motives. In one who fluctuated as this prince did, both in his ſentiments and reſolutions, this effect would eaſily be produced, from the mutability of his views and a change of circumſtances. At this juncture the induſtry of the court of Rome, and the aſſiduous endeavours of his catholic majeſty, were employed in paving the way for the meeting of the general council at Trent. As they apprehended, from the ſtate of parties in France, that the ſcheme of a national one might be puſhed there, the Spaniſh ambaſſador, Manrigue, was inſtructed to concert meaſures with the cardinal of Ferrara for preventing it. They turned the whole of their intrigues to the ſingle point of detaching the king of Navarre from his party *. A train of political artifices and arguments were laid for him, ſufficient to ſtagger or vanquiſh a more determined mind. The biſhop of Auxerre and d'Eſcars, his minions, were gained. Aſſurances were given him, that Philip would grant him the kingdom of Sardinia in exchange for that of Navarre. Still higher ſchemes, about divorcing him from his wife, and his marriage with the queen of Scotland, were propoſed. He was put in mind, that the eventual title of his family to the crown of France depended on their adherence to the catholic church. His brother the prince of Condé was repreſented as outrivalling him in popularity and intereſt with the party he now embraced. Fond of new projects, vain of the incenſe paid to him, and, in his preſent exaltation, liſtleſs in his hopes of aggran-

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* D'Avila, ibid.

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dizement, it was not difficult to obtain a complete victory over him. The * calculation of his intereſt in the ſtate being ſuperior to its reality, and the common eſtimate of his abilities exceeding his perſonal importance, the unexpected tranſition he now made, produced a ſurpriſing agitation in the ſyſtem of the court, and ſeemed totally to overwhelm the balance which the queen regent, with all her pains and ingenuity, ſtruggled to ſupport. Upon this event was founded the power of that faction of the catholic chieftains, which was called the *Triumvirate*, a combination as dangerous to the monarchy itſelf, as it was formidable to queen Catherine and the proteſtant party; the phantom of anarchy, and the embrio of civil war; it gave the firſt violent contortion to the ſtate, and by tearing the roots of government, accelerated the feuds and combuſtion of the kingdom.

and by his detachment from his party the faction of the triumvirate is formed.

The aſſemblies of the proteſtants becoming public and frequent during the conference;

The conference at Poiſſi was, in every reſpect, equivalent to a temporary toleration of the proteſtant aſſemblies by the authority of the government. The ſcheme of it not only involved this conſequence, but, † which is a circumſtance omitted by the moſt of the hiſtorians, the edict of July was, during all the time of its continuance, actually ſuſpended by an arret from the queen regent and the council. The miniſters who attended it, preached openly in the apartments of the prince of Condé and other courtiers. The paſſion for hearing them ſo far prevailed, that the cardinal of Ferrara's complaiſance to the queen led him to partake of this new entertainment. As this behaviour of the court authorized and indulged the liberty of religious worſhip, the proteſtants made no ſcruple to aſſume it every where in the utmoſt latitude. Animated by the favourable reception and the applauſes given to Beza and

* Thuan. ibid.

† Addit. aux Caſtel. liv. iii.

his

his collegues; and ſenſible more than ever of the diſpoſition of the queen regent to protect them, their aſſemblies became more frequent and univerſal. In * ſeveral parts of the kingdom the catholics, overawed by their numbers, admitted the celebration of their worſhip in the public ſchools and churches, and in others main force procured them this licentious freedom. Inſtances of it were now much encreaſed; and, even about Paris, where the proteſtants were moſt odious, their public meetings were thronged. At one of them, in the ſuburbs of St. Marcel, a tumult enſued, which put the city into an uproar. The prieſts and other officials belonging to St. Medard's church, taking the utmoſt advantage which their hold of the eccleſiaſtical battlements afforded them, put their bells in full chime, juſt as they obſerved the miniſter Malo begin his diſcourſe, to a large audience of more than two thouſand people, met in a garden a little diſtant from the church. The preacher could not poſſibly be heard. Two deputies were ſent to intreat the intermiſſion of the grievous peals. They were roughly received; and one of them had difficulty to make his eſcape, while the other was ſhut up within the church. A louder and more ſtunning charge was then ſounded from the bells. An officer of the city guard, ſtationed to prevent diſturbances, having preſented himſelf in arms before the church, was repulſed with a volley of ſtones from the ſteeple; and, whilſt he required them in the king's name to deſiſt, they drowned his remonſtrances with a deeper knell. Some of the rabble of the meeting cried out, that this was diſobedience to the officer of the peace; and, immediately forming themſelves into a body, aſſaulted the gates of the church. Having received ſome blows before they

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at one of them, near St. Medard's church, a tumult ariſes.

Dec. 25.

* Thuan. ibid. p. 584. D'Aubigne, ibid.

Book III. 1561. could burſt them open, and finding the meſſenger, who was intercepted, laid dead on the pavement; they broke down altars, images, and every thing that ſtood in their way, and wounded and took priſoners many of the prieſts and their fellow combatants, who were above forty in the church. Gabaſton, the commander of the guard, came, and carried ſeveral of them captive into the city. The parade he made about this was extravagant, and the proteſtants had reaſon to be alarmed for the conſequence of this victory. To appeaſe the mob of the Pariſians, Gabaſton, and one of his attendants, were condemned to death, becauſe they had not quelled the riot; yet it appeared evident, from various circumſtances, that the clerical militia in the church not only had begun the diſturbance, but induſtriouſly contrived the ſcheme of it, with a view of being aſſiſted from the city.

CHAP. III.

The queen regent alarmed by the power of the triumvirate—Assembly of the delegates of all the parliaments—Edict of January, for toleration—Alarm of the catholic clergy—The massacre of Vassi—Entrance of the duke of Guise into Paris—Queen Catharine's terror—Her letters to the prince of Condé—Orleans seized by him—Manifestos published by the opposite parties.

FROM the late procreation of the faction of the triumvirate, which formed a strong barrier around the catholic sanctuary, and from the efforts of the court, to bend the intolerant spirit of the papal system to the exigencies of the kingdom, and from the contrariety of the public decrees and expedients emitted by the state, a deeper shade of confusion was spread over the face of government. The magistrates, uncertain how to exert their authority, could observe no fixed order or consistency in their conduct. Men's judgments of the duties of their office varied, according to their different views of the political management. The protestant assemblies were tolerated in many places, and in others restrained. The court itself presented a model of all these inconsistencies. From the inevitable imbecillity of the administration during the pupillage of the king, every justle of the parties at court tended to engender some difficulty and distress to the government*. But its present situation became extremely critical, when the queen regent was obliged to determine, whether she ought to bow to the standard of the triumvirate, and resign the supreme direction of affairs to the duke of Guise, the constable, and the mashal St. André; or,

Jan. 1562.

The confusion of the government perplexes all its members;

* D'Avila, ibid.

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by perſiſting in the courſe ſhe had hitherto followed, of oppoſing herſelf to every exorbitant preſſure of faction, endeavour to prevent the ſubverſion of her authority, and the abuſe of the charge ſhe had of the chief adminiſtration in her ſon's minority. Much and long ſhe revolved the perplexing argument. Her deciſion will admit of a better vindication * than conſiſts with her uſual motives of action and her character. The perſons with whom ſhe conſulted, were the chancellor de l'Hoſpital, and the biſhop of Valence; moderate and detached from party, as well as men of penetration; deſirous of peace and the re-eſtabliſhment of public order. By them ſhe was confirmed in her juſt apprehenſions of the unſufferable domination of a confederacy, capable not only of braving but overturning the government; and which profeſſed to be inſtigated by principles leading directly to inteſtine war, and the havock of their opponents. From a deſire to controul the dangerous burſt of this ſtorm, ſhe determined, from the ſame counſel, to become the protector of that party againſt which its rage was directed. To try the farther influence of pacific meaſures, to render her procedure uniform, and to conclude the grand conteſt about religious toleration; when, from neceſſity, this political meaſure had been already, in ſome degree, admitted by the government, ſhe reſolved to do her utmoſt to procure the free exerciſe of religion to the proteſtants.

and the fear of the triumvirate determines the queen regent openly to ſupport the proteſtants.

She aſſembles the delegates of all the parliaments,

QUEEN CATHERINE ſhewed the greateſt attention in conducting this extraordinary and important reſolution. That it might not be deemed the private machination of the cabinet, and that the influence of the late deciſion of the parliament of Paris againſt it might be over-balanced by more auguſt authority, it was agreed

* D'Aubigne, ibid.

to conveen, by the king's order, an aſſembly of delegates from the whole parliaments of the kingdom, and the moſt conſiderable of the preſidial courts in the provinces. This convention, which being alſo attended by the principal officers of ſtate, reſembled a meeting of the notables, was accordingly held at St. Germain, about ſix weeks after the colloquy of Poiſſi was diſſolved *. After a ſpeech from the king and the chancellor, in which the queſtion about framing a new ſtatute for obviating public diſſenſions about religion was propoſed, the majority of the aſſembly determined to revoke the edict of July, and grant, under certain conditions, the public exerciſe of religion to the proteſtants. Thus, with all the ſolemnity of a moſt public deliberation, was the famous edict of January eſtabliſhed. Its tenour and proviſions † ſhewed the political ſtudy applied to render it ſuch a deed as, on a future review, might appear conſiſtent with the dignity and ſafety both of the civil and eccleſiaſtical conſtitution. Of the various particular clauſes it contained, the following are worthy of notice. The proteſtants were allowed to hold their religious aſſemblies only in the ſuburbs of the great cities. They were not permitted to build temples or churches. Upon application to the magiſtrates, the freedom of eccleſiaſtical ſynods or conſiſtories was to be granted them. They were required to obſerve the public holidays, and to celebrate no marriages within the degrees of conſanguinity preſcribed by the church. The decree itſelf was declared to be proviſional, until a general council had decided all the controverted points of religion, or the king ſhould pleaſe to eſtabliſh another regulation. The edict, thus qualified, was diſreliſhed by the parliament of Paris, on account of its repugnance to the recent judgment of their body;

who frame the famous edict of January 17, 1562.

* Thuan. ibid. p. 589. † Henault, p. 334. D'Aubigne, ibid. chap. 32.

and

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and three ſeveral mandates from the king became neceſſary to obtain its regiſtration. The king of Navarre, though he now publickly profeſſed his renunciation of the hereſy of the proteſtants, aſſented to the eſtabliſhment of the edict. He wrote to Frederic, the elector Palatine, that he would ſtill employ his intereſt in promoting religious reformation, according to the principles of the Lutheran creed *. Even ſome conferences for ſuppreſſing the adoration of images in the church were ſtill kept on foot among the clergy at court. Mallard, a doctor of the Sorbonne, put an end to theſe parleys, by aſſerting it to be a true catholic principle, that all the prevailing cuſtoms of the church ought to be maintained, notwithſtanding ſome errors and abuſes might be mingled with them.

In the midſt of theſe tranſactions, the partizans of the triumvirate appeared to give way; the conſtable and the Guiſes withdrawing from the court, with the view of ſatisfying their diſapprobation of what paſſed there, and of ripening matters for their re-entrance upon the ſcene. A party-ſtratagem was played, or attempted to be played; it being reported for ſome time, that the duke of Nemours had formed a deſign to carry off the king's brother, the duke of Orleans, and to put him under the duke of Lorain's protection, to prevent his being ſacrificed by the prevailing power of the Calviniſts. This was believed, chiefly on account of the ſudden elopement Nemour made from the court. The duke of Guiſe, and his brother the cardinal, had a more intelligible purpoſe, in the journey the one made to Joinville, and the other to Rheims †. They had concerted a meeting with the duke of Wirtemberg at Saverne in Alſace, which had the appearance only of a

The Guiſes withdrawing from the court, confer with the duke of Wirtemberg.

Feb. 12.

* Thuan. ibid.

† Ibid. lib. xxix.

private

private and accidental interview. The German duke came, accompanied with two of the moſt noted Lutheran miniſters in his dominions, whoſe names were Brentius and Andrea. It was there repreſented by the cardinal of Lorain, that from a deſire to maintain a good underſtanding with the princes of the Lutheran confeſſion in Germany, he wiſhed to explain his ſentiments and views to one of their number. He declared that he and his brother were only antagoniſts of the Calviniſts and Zuinglians, whoſe religious opinions overturned all the boundaries of civil and eccleſiaſtical order; and that his appearance at the conference of Poiſſi might witneſs his regard to the Auſbourg articles of faith. The Lutheran miniſters were eaſily perſuaded of his propenſity to their ſyſtem; and the duke of Wirtemberg, after excuſing the cardinal's oppoſition to the Calviniſtical ſect in France, declared his own diſſatisfaction with it, and his reſolution not to aſſiſt the Hugonots. This was the point at which the Guiſes aimed, who now, in the prelude of civil war, foreſaw the puſh that would be made by the oppoſite parties for German ſuccours.

As the colliſion of the parties in the political ſyſtem increaſed, that of the hierarchy was alſo put into commotion. From the congreſs of Poiſſi, and the edict of January, and the circumſtances attending them; the catholic church, ſenſible of a more direct aſſault, ſeemed to be rouzed from its internal torpor, and to collect new powers of action. The proper ſpiritual weapons of the ſanctuary *, were now employed by the clerical order, with vaſt earneſtneſs. The catholic biſhops, doctors, and curates, were incited to emulate their antagoniſts in preaching, and to warn their flocks againſt apoſtaſy, and the ſeduction of heretics. They propheſied

The catholic clergy alarm the people,

* Caſtelnau, liv. iii. chap. 6.

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the judgments and evils that threatened the kingdom, from the irruption of new ſectaries, and their impious oppoſition to the ceremonies and diſcipline of the antient church. The mendicant orders took their routs through the towns and villages, to diſſeminate their popular exhortations. The biſhops appointed faſts and penances, and called the people to join their moſt devout orizons for the ſafety of the catholic faith. Some of the zealots intimated, that when the ſword of juſtice was born in vain by the magiſtrates, other courſes ſhould be taken for the repreſſion of hereſy. This defenſive and militant poſture of the church was provoked by the new phenomenon of the public aſſemblies of the proteſtants. The order of the government to them *, to rear no temples, and to quit the churches they had occupied, being univerſally obeyed, the catholics were aſtoniſhed at the view of the vaſt multitudes of them diſplayed every where in the open fields, in gardens, in hedge-ways, or under the covert of old granaries and ragged walls. The new manner, attitude, and fervor of the miniſters occaſioned a prodigious reſort of all ranks and denominations of people to their auditories; among which, numbers that had been reputed catholics, and others that were ſtill of that communion, appeared. The bulk of the catholics beheld them in this diſarray with animoſity; and, from the example of ſome of the leading men, as well as from native prejudice, thought it a worthy enterprize to diſturb and break up their conventicles. Their courage †, however, in this way, was kept within moderate bounds, while the chieftains of the court appeared equally divided. But the conjunction of the king of Navarre to the triumvirate rendered them forward in quarrels and inſults.

while the proteſtant ſermons drew great crouds.

* Thuan. lib. xxviii. p. 584.

† Caſtelnau, ibid.

IT ſeems to have been wiſely judged by the Guiſes, that to leave the king of Navarre for a little, the chief agent of their party at court*, would prove the beſt method of fixing him in their intereſt, and impelling him to action. He ſtood there oppoſed to the prince of Condé, for whom he had contracted averſion and jealouſy. Placed in a ſituation, where, in ſpite of his embarraſſment, he would be prompted to aſſert his importance, and in which, on the hinge of circumſtances, he would be carried forward in one direction; they truſted he would perform the part they expected from him. The event ſhewed they were not miſtaken. Finding that party exalted by the queen's favour, from which he had withdrawn, and beholding his brother the prince of Condé buſily employed at Paris, in engaging friends and adherents, he ſoon thought matters were brought to extremity, and ſent a diſpatch to the duke of Guiſe, requiring him to repair directly to the court. This was what the duke looked for; who, certainly, had retired from the court, to put himſelf in a condition to anſwer ſuch a meſſage. Having ordered the German captain †, Rokendolf, to form two companies of horſemen, he ſet out from Joinville, with a conſiderable train of his friends and domeſtics; and, about mid-day on the firſt of March, reached Vaſſi, where an affair happened which was more atrocious than all the other rencounters that had yet ariſen among the catholics and Calviniſts, and which, by ſome ſuperficial writers, has been reputed the main occaſion as well as the ſignal of the civil war.

The duke of Guiſe being ſent for to the court by the king of Navarre;

ſets out with a troop of horſe and comes to Vaſſi.

March 1.

IN this ſmall town in Champagne, which was one of the eſtates from whence the queen of Scots, as dowager of France, received

* D'Avila, liv. iii. † Caſtelnau, liv. iii. chap. 4.

Book III. 1562. her jointure, a conventicle of proteſtants had for ſome time ſubſiſted. Their place of worſhip was a granary, where ſometimes ſeven hundred, or a thouſand people, convened. Its vicinity to Joinville had given offence to ſome of the duke of Guiſe's houſehold; and it is ſaid * that his mother, Antonia of Bourbon, had complained of it to her ſon. When the duke approached Vaſſi he heard a bell ring, and enquired the reaſon of it, at that late hour on Sunday, with ſome emotion. He was told it indicated the meeting of the Hugonots for worſhip in the afternoon. While he halted in the high way of the town, for ſome people that were to join his retinue, the prior and curate of the church requeſted him to turn into the ſtreet leading to the conventicle, that he might take a near view of it. He did not comply with this petition; but his pages, equerries, and lacqueys, had already detached themſelves in parties to reconnoitre the Hugonots. They marched up, ſounding their trumpets, in a frolicſome ſhew of battle. Their geſtures and expreſſions were framed to inſult and provoke thoſe who ſtood without the doors; and when they received replies in the ſame ſtyle, vollies of ſtones and ſome gun-ſhots from them brought on a violent ſcuffle. The unarmed croud could not reſiſt their aſſault; but hemmed in on all ſides, men, women, and children, preſſed upon each other, while ſome endeavoured to block up the doors, and others to eſcape by the tiles and windows. The ſlaughter was begun; when the duke of Guiſe himſelf came up to reſtrain the fury of his people. While he called out to them, a ſtone ſtruck him on the cheek. When his attendants obſerved blood from the ſlight wound, they all joined, notwithſtanding his remonſtrances, in executing vengeance on the multitude; of which ſixty

His equerries inſult the proteſtants at their place of worſhip;

and perpetrate what was named the maſſacre of Vaſſi.

* Matthieu, ibid. p. 254. Thuan. lib. xxix. p. 594.

were

were killed on the ſpot, and two hundred wounded, and the reſt expoſed to the utmoſt danger in making their eſcape. The duke, vexed at this ſcene which he was ſenſible might be imputed to him, endeavoured to throw the blame upon the ſufferers, by accuſing them of being the aggreſſors; of which, however, there was not the leaſt probability. Having called the judge of the diſtrict before him, and challenged him for ſuffering ſuch turbulent people to aſſemble; he is ſaid, in replying to the excuſe he offered of being obliged to obey the edict of January, to have laid his hand on his ſword, and made uſe of theſe paſſionate and haughty expreſſions; "With this I ſhall ſoon cut the bond of that edict." The duke, both from his private character and his behaviour upon the occaſion, may be acquitted of intending to perpetrate ſuch an act of butchery; and no hiſtorians of reputation charge him with the purpoſe of it. It is alledged, indeed, that he wiſhed, perhaps, to diſperſe the Hugonot congregation, without hurt or injury to the perſons of any of them; which ſuppoſition may account for his inattention to the firſt excurſion of his followers; the circumſtance which gave occaſion to the whole ſcene. It was called, not unjuſtly, by the proteſtants, the maſſacre of Vaſſi; and loudly complained of as a groſs and ſhocking violation of all law and government, as well as a breach of the edict that tolerated their aſſemblies*. They ſent their public complaints of it by ſome commiſſioners to the queen regent. The miniſters of the injured party, at a time when people of their profeſſion were continually expoſed to ſuch aſſaults, were more excuſable for inſiſting upon the cruelty, and aggravating the circumſtances of this bloodſhed, than the catholic divines, who laboured to juſtify it, by preaching up

* Matthieu, ibid.

its

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its conformity to the actions of ſome of the prophets and kings of the Old Teſtament, when they hewed down the prieſts, and ſmote the worſhippers of ſtrange gods.

The queen regent perplexed in her reſolutions,

As the tide of political faction now ſwelled to a height around the court, the counſels of the queen regent were extremely agitated. Not quite fixed in her own reſolutions, and determined by fear, more than by other proper motives, to adhere to her party; and her principle of dread of the inſolent combination of the triumvirate, being ready to reſolve itſelf into terror, and hurry her into ſubmiſſion, ſhe felt the diſtractions of anxiety and diffidence. The court was now at Monceaux, where the prince of Condé ſolicited her to prohibit the duke of Guiſe to appear in Paris, whither the king of Navarre, the marſhal St. André, and their partizans, had already gone to inſtigate the citizens to favour their uſurpation of the government *. The failure of the efforts, which the prince himſelf had made, to keep the Pariſians, who were diſarmed, in dread of the armament of the ſmall number of his adherents, rendered this meaſure the more neceſſary. The queen ſent her order, both to the king of Navarre and the duke of Guiſe, upon this head; directing the latter to come with his ordinary equipage to the king at Monceaux †. His anſwer was, that his preſent occupations did not permit him to attend the court. She uſed ſome methods to diſſipate the confederacy, by ordering the marſhal St. André to retire to his government of the Lionoiſe, and by ſome more condeſcending propoſitions to the duke of Guiſe, which proved unſucceſsful. Her authority was no bridle to the career of faction. The duke of Guiſe ‡, without waiting on the king, and contrary to her

ſends a meſſage to the duke of Guiſe;

* D'Aubigne, liv. iii. chap. 2. D'Avila, ibid. † Thuan. lib. xxix. p. 596.
‡ Caſtelnau, ibid.

expreſs

expreſs command, entered the city of Paris with a train of attendants, by the gate of St. Denis, through which the kings of France uſually made their triumphal proceſſions. This circumſtance, moſt indifferent in itſelf, was obſerved on account of its conſonance to the extraordinary congratulations of his reception. The Prevôt des Marchands, and the other Pariſian magiſtrates, went out to meet and conduct him into the city. The words of joyful acclamation publickly uſed to hail the king, were reſounded by ſome of the citizens, while he gently intreated them to check thoſe too glaring teſtimonies of their regard. A deputation came from the city, to demand the king's and queen regent's preſence there, to prevent the enterpriſes of the Hugonots; and that the citizens might be furniſhed with arms. The laſt requeſt, which force could ſoon have procured, was granted. A council of the partizans of the triumvirate was formed in Paris, from the government of which the marſhal Montmorency, by his father's advice, was removed, and the charge of it committed to the cardinal of Bourbon. The ſuperiority of the confederates, as well as their aim in all thoſe violent meaſures, was manifeſt: The metropolis offering to become their fortreſs, a military band being already muſtered by the duke of Guiſe, the court defenceleſs, and the king's perſon and the queen mother's reduced under the power of their faction.

who diſregards it, and enters Paris conducted by the magiſtrates,

and eſtabliſhes the power of the triumvirate in the city.

It is probable that queen Catherine's reſolution to hold out againſt this powerful combination, would have ſoon been ſhaken, if the exceſſive perplexity and terror, into which ſhe was thrown, had not induced her to think that no courſe was more deſperate than that of putting herſelf into the hands of the triumvirate. Her womaniſh fears aſſiſted her uſual arts in diſcovering their ſecret conferences. As in theſe, men freely vent their paſſions, and breathe

From terror of that faction queen Catherine rendered deſperate,

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breathe more ferocity than they mean to execute, ſhe learned what a horrid ſpeech the marſhal St. André had made with reſpect to herſelf. It is even affirmed, that ſhe * overheard him ſay, " that to quaſh her reſiſtance, and give peace to the kingdom, ſhe ought to be thrown into the river". Hence indignation and deſpair prompted her to graſp † the ſupport of the inferior party, and to determine to run the preſent extremity of their fate. To have the liberty of eſcaping to Orleans, where ſhe knew the prince of Condé would muſter his ſtrength, ſhe betook herſelf with the king to Fountainbleau, a royal pleaſure houſe, where ſhe could not be ſo readily ſhut up. To gain time, and to make his retreat with the leaſt diſhonour, the prince managed a treaty with the cardinal of Bourbon with reſpect to his quitting Paris, on condition the duke of Guiſe retired likewiſe. In this he alſo gratified queen Catherine, who was afraid of an immediate ſedition in Paris; and, though ſtruck with perplexity, and on the brink of deſperation, ſtill kept up the appearance of an independent authority. But when in the execution of this compromiſe, the prince of Condé marched off to la Ferte in the borders of Picardy, while the duke of Guiſe preſented himſelf at Fountainbleau, with the beſt part of his martial train, her conſternation awaked afreſh ‡. She became anxiouſly inquiſitive about the number and ſtrength of the proteſtants in the kingdom; and being told by the Colignis, that their churches amounted to two thouſand one hundred and fifty, her queſtions were puſhed further than others of their party thought fit to explain themſelves to her. Diſtruſtful, apprehenſive, and ſolicitous of refuge, ſhe wrote ſeveral letters to the prince of Condé,

thinks of eſcaping to Orleans;

March 31.

* Addit. aux Caſtelnau, liv. iii. chap. 6. Brantome Eloge de Reigne.

† Matthieu, ibid. p. 255.

‡ Thuan. ibid.

in

in which ſhe repreſented the debaſement of the royal name and dignity, from her ſituation; and called upon him in emphatic terms, to come to the ſuccour of the young king, the mother, and the kingdom, now in the utmoſt danger recommended to his protection. The originals of four of theſe letters, the copies of which le Laboureur * gives, were preſerved by the prince, and exhibited to foreign princes for his vindication in the commencement of the civil war. The juſtice of hiſtory requires it to be obſerved upon this paſſage, that D'Avila, from extreme affectation to refine upon the whole of queen Catherine's actions, and to raiſe them to what he reckoned the true ſublime of Italian policy, has thrown a falſe light both on her condition and her conduct; and overcharged the picture of them with artificial colours. He makes no mention of the particular mortifications ſhe met with from the triumvirate, and ſpeaks of her letters to the prince of Condé, or what he calls the aſſurances ſhe gave him, as importing only a higher ſtrain of her political diſſimulation; and repreſents her touched with no more than a ſlight diſcontent, when ſhe was carried away by compulſion. It is the manifeſt and general fault of this author, to ſubtilize even beyond the genius of Catherine of Medicis.

and writes for protection to the prince of Condé.

While the queen, beſet around by the partizans of the confederacy, exhauſted her invention in conſulting with the chancellor how to evade the demand they made of her taking the rout to Paris, news arrived of the prince of Condé being on his march to the court. The inſtances for her removal were then redoubled. Her ſpirits being rouſed to reſiſt them, ſhe became more artful,

* Addit. aux Caſtel. liv. iii. chap. 8. Matthieu, ibid. p. 259.

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and more eloquent in her own † defence. The king of Navarre was overcome by her declarations of regard to the catholic religion, and her aſſurances of friendſhip to him. But, perſuaded by the duke of Guiſe that ſhe meant to impoſe on them, and wait the opportunity of declaring for the prince of Condé, he returned to the charge, and inſiſted that his brother's approach denounced the intention to ſeize the king's perſon; and declared his firm reſolution to carry him directly to Paris, whether ſhe choſe to follow or to ſtay. There was no room for farther ſubterfuge. Her equipage and the king's being haſtily prepared, they were conducted to Melun. Their lodgings were appointed in the caſtle, and the guards ordered to keep the ſtricteſt watch. The whole night was ſpent by the queen in ſolicitude; and as the chancellor, and thoſe ſhe truſted, had equal apprehenſions of the conſequence of this ſubmiſſion of the royal authority to the power of faction, ſome conſultations were entered into about her attempting an eſcape, and a boat for her paſſage over the Seine was privately kept in readineſs. The next day ſhe ſtill held parleys for her liberty, and offered all the terms that could be required of her by the party, on condition ſhe might be allowed to return to Fountainbleau. The duke of Guiſe then interpoſing, produced letters from Marlaix, the Prevôt des Marchands, in which the city of Paris was ſaid to be threatened with an uproar, unleſs the king appeared. The queen mother, in ſilence, and ſhewing evidently that ſhe acted from fear and conſtraint, and the young king ſhedding tears, they were again put in motion; while ‡ the duke of Guiſe, who obſerved this, ſaid aloud, "that good was always good, whether it aroſe from love or from fear." They were conducted to the Bois des Vincennes, and from thence to Paris.

But ſhe, together with the king, is carried forcibly to Paris by the triumvirate.

† Thuan. ibid. ‡ D'Avila, ibid.

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The prince of Condé arriving too late near Paris with ſome troops of horſe,

THE prince of Condé had by this time got within two leagues of Paris, intending to paſs the Seine with his troops by the bridge of St. Clou. The Pariſians ſhut their gates, and mounted guards upon the ramparts, as if they had expected an immediate ſiege. The prince had neither intention, nor force ſufficient, to diſturb them. From the capture of the king and queen regent by his antagoniſts, his aim was defeated. He marched quietly to the other ſide of the river, to allow his troops time to breathe, and to deliberate upon the meaſures he ought now to follow. A ſcheme had been already * formed for the ſeizing of Orleans, where the proteſtants were numerous, and the deputy governor Montereau appeared to act with moderation and indulgence toward that party. The conduct of it had been committed to d'Andelot, who had not his equal in this kind of ſudden and briſk exploit. He had animated the proteſtants, made them acquainted with his deſign, and lay concealed with three hundred horſemen, near the city, to get poſſeſſion of one of the gates. But the whole project had a reference to the ſucceſs of the prince of Condé's attempt to beat the duke of Guiſe and his partizans from Fountainbleau, or intercept the king and the court in their rout to Paris. But the execution of it ſtood now ſuſpended; while the prince heſitated about his procedure. Thoroughly ſenſible of the diſadvantage of his ſituation, when, by the courſe of accidents, the adverſe party could employ the authority of the royal name to diſcredit his undertakings, reluctant to kindle the train of civil war, and unprepared for it, he held his rout towards Orleans, without finding the bottom of his reſolutions, and ſtopt at Angerville. Here he received letters from the queen, that bore ſome faint expreſſions of regard, and of her wiſhes of an accommodation; while expreſſes following

* D'Aubigne, ibid. chap. 3. D'Avila, ibid.

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is disappointed of his aim,

close upon each other, came to inform him, that d'Andelot was engaged, and hard put to it in his enterprize. The vollies of shot, and the ringing of the bells of Orleans, were heard several miles off, and denounced the danger he incurred. The intelligence, instead of damping, rouzed the flame of undaunted resolution and magnanimity in his breast. "Let us go on, said he, we have plunged into the water, and must either drink or drown;" and ordered his troops to follow him up at full gallop to Orleans. So little had the rumour of insurrection transpired, that nothing could seem more amazing to the people of this district, than the sudden spectacle of such a number of men in arms, amounting to more than two thousand; who seemed bent on some strange and unaccountable expedition. Their disorderly and headlong career, attended with the tumbling of some of the men from their horses, and the strewing of the roads with cloaks and hats, rendered them objects of derision to the quiet spectators. Their speed was favourable for d'Andelot's success. Montereau had suspected the design, and exerted himself to defeat it. There was an obstinate and not unbloody struggle for St. John's gate. The approach of the prince of Condé terrified the catholic townsmen. The city submitted, and the governor, with such as chose to accompany him, was allowed to retire.

but takes possession of Orleans.

THE triumvirate in Paris celebrated their victory by some demonstrations of their hatred of the edict of January, and their indignation against the public assemblies of the Hugonots. The constable with marshal array proceeded to one of their places of resort without the city; and forming * a pile of the seats and benches

* Matthieu, ibid.

found

found there, made a bonfire of the whole, to the ſatisfaction of the applauding mob. He repeated this entertainment the ſame day at Popin-court, while ſeveral of the nobility cenſured him as degrading his dignity by theſe appearances. But every thing was granted to the humour of the populace. They were allowed to carry their inſults the utmoſt length †. Perſons ſuſpected of a biaſs in their religious principles, were treated with contumely and abuſe in the ſtreets; and often obliged to take the refuge of the churches, or to fly out of the city. Such of the miniſters and preachers as could be found were impriſoned, and their lives only ſpared by way of favour. This was alſo the revenge of the Pariſians upon the proteſtants, for their preſuming to diſpute the field with the catholics in many places, at Cahors, Amiers, Abbeville, Troyes, Dijon, and Tours; where various tumults and frays had enſued, before the publication of the edict of January. The triumvirate were no leſs impetuous in their counſels for immediately declaring war, in the king's name, againſt the prince of Condé and his adherents. To paſs over what is particularly ‡ related by Father Daniel, from the memoirs of the duke of Nevers, of their ſtill entertaining their deſign to deprive the queen regent of all authority, and even to make her the victim of their reſentment, it will be ſufficient to remark from the beſt authorities, their arbitrary procedure in converting the royal council into a conſiſtory of their particular aſſociates. Thoſe who were againſt coming directly to extremities, were ſilenced or excluded. The chancellor de l'Hoſpital was told by Montmorency, that gentlemen of the robe like him went beyond their ſphere, when they pretended to vote in deliberations about war. "It may be true, replied the

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The triumvirate acts with haughtineſs,

and over-awe the moderate party of the court.

† Caſtelnau, liv. iii. chap. 8.

‡ Tom. v. p. 736.

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chancellor, that they cannot judge how the warlike operations are to be conducted; but they underſtand as well as others, whether or not it may be expedient to undertake them." He afterwards found it neceſſary to abſtain from the cabinet-council; the new collegues of which were, the marquis of Boiſſi, Honorat marquis of Villars, the count de Sanſae, and de la Broſſe, who were devoted to the duke of Guiſe and the conſtable; and the biſhop of Auxerre and des Eſcars, the favourites of the king of Navarre.

Notwithstanding this apparent indignation of the parties to each other, and their hurry towards hoſtilities, it ſeemed credible to many, that an accommodation of differences might take place. People * could hardly be perſuaded, when they obſerved the arrangement of the factions; the conſtable bandied with the duke of Guiſe againſt the Colignis his nephews, the king of Navarre ſuddenly ſlipt from his old friends and oppoſed to his brother; but that in ſuch a ſtrange confuſion of intereſts and attachments, the preſent motives of confederacy might ſoon recoil, and the poſture of the factions be quickly varied or reverſed. The grand ſubject of quarrel about religion, beſides that its influence upon ſeveral of the chieftains might be ſuſpected, appeared to be abſorbed in their political conteſt for the ſuperiority at court. The triumvirate had ariſen previous to the eſtabliſhment of the edict of January, with which regulation the king of Navarre was known to have concurred. The politicians therefore looked on the ruffle and confuſion of the government as a puzzling game played by the courtiers, the concluſion of which might prove more peaceful than what might now be imagined by many. It may indeed be ſuppoſed, notwithſtand-

* Caſtelnau, ibid.

ing the ſtrong and vehement enmity of the Catholics and the Hugonots, that the eruption of civil diſcord might have been poſtponed, and the exceſſes of religious antipathies reſtrained for a time, by the efforts of the government, if the party leaders had not begun their violent controverſy for domination, and endeavoured to blow the flame of popular ſedition, in order to promote their political deſigns and purpoſes.

IT is the remark of la Nouë, a famous partizan of the proteſtants, in his diſcourſes political and military, that the incident of the maſſacre of Vaſſi proved the ſafety of that party. He aſſerts, that the ‡ indignation and horror diffuſed among them, from the ſhocking accounts of that outrage, was the ſole incentive which prompted a number of gentlemen in the provinces to put themſelves in arms, and repair unſummoned to the prince of Condé; who, without their ſpeedy and ſeaſonable ſupport, could neither have poſſeſſed himſelf of Orleans, nor dared to make any conſiderable attempt to reſiſt the limited power of the triumvirate. It appears unqueſtionable that the bulk of the proteſtants, ſatisfied with obtaining the edict of January, and unactuated by any particular motive of reſentment againſt the government, were engaged by no concert, at that time, to begin an inſurrection. The tranſmiſſion of letters from the prince of Condé, and of addreſſes from the proteſtant miniſters about him to their congregations to ſpread the alarm of danger, and engage their whole body to unite in furniſhing the neceſſary means of defence, were proceedings conſequent to the taking of Orleans. In his particular ſolicitations by emiſſaries then ſent through the kingdom, and in his general

Manifeſtos are publiſhed by the prince of Condé

‡ P. Daniel, ibid. p. 739.

manifeſtos,

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manifeſtos, were repreſented the juſt and reaſonable grounds he had to oppoſe the uſurped and tyrannical power of the triumvirate; who had made the king and queen regent captives, inſolently contemned their orders, cruelly violated the edicts of peace, and animated the populace of Paris to tumults and ſedition, and endeavoured to rule in the ſtate, and domineer in the metropolis, by the lawleſs ſway of their faction. To prevent the horrors of civil war, and re-eſtabliſh the public tranquillity, it was ſtated as a neceſſary condition, that the three chieftains, Guiſe, Montmorency, and St. André, ſhould diſmiſs their military train, leave the king and his mother at liberty to conſtitute their cabinet-council according to their pleaſure, agree to confirm the edict of January, and maintain it until the king came to his majority. Upon theſe terms the prince offered to diſperſe his party, and retire immediately from Orleans. When theſe public declarations were framed, and copies of them ſent to the queen regent, the formal act of aſſociation among the proteſtant chiefs was indited, and ſubſcribed by all the lords and gentlemen who had joined them *. Being publiſhed about the middle of April, the cautious language in which it was conceived, reflected no diſhonour upon the party. Beſides the uſual reſerve of allegiance to the king, and of ſubmiſſion to the authority of the queen regent, and of the laws, the confederacy was declared to ſubſiſt only while the king himſelf was incapable to aſſume the reins of government. Under his majeſty, the prince of Condé was acknowledged to be their chief, whom they engaged to obey with their lives and fortunes, in proſecution of the purpoſe of their aſſociation, without permitting or authorizing robberies, murders, aſſaſſinations, the ſacking or unlicenſed pillage of churches,

and terms of peace offered;

* Matthieu, ibid. Thuan. ibid. p. 599.

or

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or any public injuries. They however took the liberty uſual to a political party, when they endeavoured further to apologize for this confederacy, by alledging that, under the auſpices of the council of Trent, a league of the catholic princes was to be formed, for the utter extirpation of the proteſtants in France, Switzerland, and Geneva; and for the final execution of the ſame project in Germany and all over Europe. The ſurmiſes propagated with reſpect to the reality of ſuch a concert at this period, may be reckoned not only premature, but fictitious. The proteſtants being the weaker party, were the more apt to imagine and dread ſuch combinations againſt them, and the reports ſpread about them eaſily gained credit. Upon this occaſion they made a conſiderable impreſſion in France, and in foreign countries.

April 15th.

To which the court makes replies.

THE court partizans having expected this challenge of the proteſtants, by ſuch public manifeſtos, were prepared to anſwer it; and the firſt of their declarations was iſſued at Paris on the ſame day in which thoſe of the prince of Condé were divulged. The full liberty of the king and queen regent was, in their majeſties names, aſſerted; and the contrary rumour that was ſpread of their ſuffering compulſion, declared to be the falſe and groundleſs invention of a party, to ſcreen their turbulent deſigns *. The queen regent endeavoured, in her letters ſent by the baron de la Garde, to argue the matter with the prince of Condé in a gentler way, and to perſuade him, that unleſs his recourſe to extremities prevented it, ſhe was diſpoſed to maintain her former regard and friendſhip to him; and that ſhe was not inſenſible that the catholic leaders of whom he complained, gave way to their particular

* Caſtelnau, ibid. chap. 9.

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* Caſtelnau, ibid.

CHAP. IV.

Surprize of many cities by the proteſtants—Propoſals of peace—The armies of the catholics and the proteſtants take the field—Conferences for peace broke off and renewed.—Failure of a night attack by the proteſtants.

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THE ſurprize of Orleans by the prince of Condé with an inconſiderable force, was too deſpicable in itſelf to intimidate the powerful faction at court, or occaſion a great alarm; but the dangerous conſequences of his declaring himſelf the chief of a party for controuling the power of the triumvirate, and maintaining the toleration of the proteſtants, according to the edicts, became immediately apparent. Among the lords of the court, and the body of the nobility, and thoſe who had bore commiſſions or were actual officers in the army, ſeveral of the moſt conſpicuous both in rank and fortune, ſeemed only to wait for this ſignal of oppoſition, to have an opportunity of venturing their lives and eſtates in promoting it. Beſides the three Colignis and others, who had always attached themſelves to the prince of Condé, there were ſoon aſſembled around him at Orleans, the count of Rochefoucault, the viſcount of Grammont and Guiche, the count of Montgomery, the lords de Soubiſe, de Moüy, d'Eſternay, de Genlis, de Piennes, de St. Phale; ſome of them from antipathy to the Guiſes, as well as from propenſity to the proteſtant opinions, and others from particular motives of intereſt and family connexion *. Thoſe chieftains were all well accompanied with trains of the gentry from the different provinces, and conſiderable levies of their friends and

The troops of the Hugonots are drawn together at Orleans;

* Caſtelnau, ibid.

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vaſſals. The count de Grammont † alone is ſaid to have collected three or four thouſand old ſoldiers of Gaſcony. The bands of the prince of Porcien, and of the count de Rochefoucault, alſo formed a large body of men. But while they drew together their levies of men, and the court gave out commiſſions in the king of Navarre's name, to the officers in the provinces to raiſe an army, the ſtrength of the whole body of the proteſtants diſperſed throughout the kingdom, being ſuddenly put in motion, produced an aſtoniſhing effect. In the ſpace of a few weeks the train of inſurrection, kindled in the cities, burſt forth like the exploſion of a great mine, in one vaſt blaze. It involved the ſeizure of the cities of Blois, Poictiers, Tours, Angers, Baugeney, Rochelle, Roüen, Ponteau de Mer, Dieppe, Havre de Grace, Bourges, Moutauban, Caſtres, Montpellier, Niſmes the country of the Vivares, the Cevennes, and almoſt the whole of the Venaiſſin, Lions, Grenoble, Romans, Vienne, and Valence, and a variety of ſmaller towns, forts, and caſtles ‡. The catalogue of them amounted to near the ſum total of the walled towns in the provinces of France, excepting Bourdeaux, Thouloufe, Calais, and ſome other frontier places. Hiſtory affords few examples of a more inſtantaneous and ſucceſsful inſurrection, eſpecially when the great diſproportion of the number of the proteſtants to that of the catholics in France is conſidered, together with the advantages the latter poſſeſſed, by their occupation of all the poſts and offices of authority and power under the government. On the other hand, the unknown and concealed force of the proteſtants, whom the long ſeverities of the ſtate had firmly united, and conſtrained to the uſe of defenſive arms, their

and in the mean time the general body of them riſe in arms,

and ſurprize many of the cities.

† D'Aubigne, liv. 3. chap. 5.

‡ Caſtelnau, ibid. chap. 9. Thuan. ibid. D'Avila.

intrepidity

intrepidity and ſpirit in this firſt violent attempt for liberty, their reſentment of various ſufferings, and the aſtoniſhment cauſed by their general enterprize, would contribute to give them the ſuperiority. If to thoſe circumſtances be added that moſt material one, the inconſiderable force of the government in all thoſe cities and towns of which the inhabitants chiefly formed the garriſons and the defence, the ſurpriſing event will become more ſuſceptible of an explication.

To attempt the ſhorteſt detail of this invaſion and ſurprize of the cities, would perplex our narrative, and render it extremely tedious. It may be proper, however, to obſerve in general, that though this atchievement proved the firſt ſhock of civil war, and could not fail to be attended with ſome effuſion of blood, it occaſioned a ſcene of terror and confuſion rather than of ſlaughter. Stratagems, night incurſions, and unexpected conſpiracies, put the proteſtants in poſſeſſion of various towns and caſtles, where they were inferior in ſtrength. In others, where they exceeded the catholics in number, or equalled them, they met with no reſiſtance. In many places their * appearance in arms commanded immediate ſubmiſſion, and their inſurrections were ſufficient to expel the governors. The populous city of Roüen yielded to them almoſt without any tumult, and the caſe was the ſame at Dieppe and other places. It was in the main a revolt, not a reduction by force, few towns being in the preciſe ſituation of equal powers on both ſides, to render the conflict obſtinate. At Thouloufe, and Limoux in Languedoc, and ſome places of Guienne, where this happened, a miſerable ſeries of adventures enſued. It

* D'Aubigne, liv. iii. chap. 4. Thuan. ibid. p. 600.

was

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They are charged with the ravage of the churches more than with bloodshed.

was one fierce combat after another, the protraction of encounters without deciſion, and the alternate efforts of fierceneſs, cruelty, and depredation, without controul. But in this preliminary ſcene of war, the charge againſt the proteſtants was not that of bloody outrage. Their profanation of the churches was chiefly complained of by the catholics; and it is certain that their religious zeal was let looſe againſt what they reckoned the groſs idolatry of the Romiſh church. The ſacred ſhrines being ſtript of their ornaments, and their ſumptuous attire carried off, the images were broke in pieces, the relicks trampled upon, and the altars thrown to the ground. The prince of Condé, and their principal leaders, exerted their authority and influence to reſtrain this ravage. But it had attended the firſt inſurrections in a variety of places, in which, ſo far from having the direction of thoſe ſudden enterprizes, they often were informed of them only by their accompliſhment. When, on * account of this exceſs, they were reproached by the oppoſite faction, they anſwered, that they had prohibited it by the ſevereſt penalties, and had actually puniſhed ſome offenders, and ſet the contrary example when they took poſſeſſion of Orleans. Upon this point one reply given by the prince of Condé was remarkable for its ſting, when he alledged that, while the catholics often exclaimed againſt this cataſtrophe of their dumb and breathleſs images, which yet he had endeavoured to prevent, they choſe to be ſilent about the regret and redreſs that was due for the atrocious havock of men, thoſe living and ſenſible images of the divinity, whom in cold blood they had mangled and deſtroyed at Vaſſi, and more lately at Sens, Agen, and Abbeville; for ſuch additional violences at this time had been committed by the catholics, which

* Caſtelnau, ibid.

tended

tended to whet the reſentment and ferocity of both parties, and prepare them to act, without remorſe, all the barbarities that followed in the courſe of the civil war. BOOK III. 1562.

THE queen regent and the courtiers, now beholding with aſtoniſhment the diſaſter of the great cities, and the hard work cut out for them by the armed power of the proteſtants, betook themſelves again to freſh propoſals, and negotiations with the prince of Condé. The parliament of Paris * wrote letters to him in the moſt engaging terms, profeſſing, while they juſtified the court party, their earneſt regard to his honour, and their deſire to ſee him return to his place about the king, and proteſting their conviction of his innocence, which they had certified by a public arret in their judicature, and by recording all the memorials he had tranſmitted to them. The prince choſe to correſpond with them in their own ſtyle, but knew too well their biaſs to his opponents, to be much impreſſed with their admonitions. He anſwered their addreſs by a new proteſtation, to be entered in the regiſter of parliament. He yet with more reaſon entertained the views of pacification, from the ſituation of the queen regent with the triumvirate. In this opinion, however, his candour had eaſily miſled his judgment, and it was not long before he perceived his miſtake. The fact appears unqueſtionable, that queen Catherine had been puſhed by her juſt dread of the triumvirate, beyond the power of diſſimulation, to ſeek for refuge from the prince of Condé. But it is no leſs evident that ſhe ſoon became ſenſible, that her circumſtances were by no means ſo deplorable as ſhe had cauſe to imagine. In ſpite of all their menaces, the triumvirate were not ſo harmonious

May.

The catholics make propoſals of peace.

* Matthieu, ibid. p. 259.

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a body, as to want none of her aſſiſtance for their unanimity. When the prince of Condé had declared himſelf, and the proteſtants roſe in arms, the advantage redounding to her was viſible. She had no reaſon then to apprehend either contempt or injury from the inſulting cabal; when their adverſaries were muſtered againſt them, and would receive the queen mother into their protection. At preſent, her importance to thoſe who called themſelves the courtiers and royaliſts, appeared to be inhanced; and ſhe could truſt to her management of events for maintaining it. It gave her high ſatisfaction * to ſee an immediate revenge taken on thoſe who had threatened her, by the prince of Condé, in ſeveral acrimonious pieces publiſhed againſt them; in which the king of Navarre was only ſpared. It was believed that her confident, the biſhop of Valence, compoſed moſt of them for the prince; and the ſtyle of ſome of them ſhewed the author to be well acquainted with the anecdotes of the court, and who choſe to beſtow, with freedom and ſeverity, his laſhes on the triumvirs. Queen Catherine was therefore determined, from various reaſons, to abide by the ground ſhe had gained, but ſtill continued to correſpond with the prince by new overtures of peace. He was naturally candid, and meant to avoid a civil war; but his indignation againſt the domination of the Guiſes, his antient enemies, and his diſtruſt of their deſigns, kept him in ſuſpenſe. When he inſiſted ſtill for their being obliged to quit the cuſtody of the king, and offered to give his children as hoſtages for his engagement to diſarm; the court made anſwer, that the circumſtances of the ſtate could not admit of ſuch a meaſure, and that they kept their ſtation near the perſon of the king, whoſe protectors they were, in behalf of all the catholics in the kingdom.

and anſwers are made and acrimonious pieces publiſhed by Condé.

* Thuan. ibid. p. 603.

Accord-

1562.

ACCORDING to the avowed reſolutions and public propoſals of the court, the edict of January was ſtill to be maintained; but the three partizans agreed in a ſupplication or remonſtrance to the king, to ſubvert this rule of government. It was artfully introduced to teſtify, in anſwer to the many impeachments of ambition and tyranny now advanced againſt the Guiſes, that they had been and were actuated by no other motive than that of an inviolable and conſcientious attachment to the catholic faith, and their ſenſe of the dependance of the good of the kingdom on its preſervation. They petitioned therefore, from a religious principle which they thought themſelves bound to ſupport, that no public toleration ſhould be granted to the proteſtants *. They propoſed that all inveſted with public offices, employments, or commiſſions under the government, ſhould be obliged to make profeſſion of the catholic religion, and that the forfeiture of all theſe ſhould be annexed to the refuſal; but that the aliens to the faith might have an indemnity for the ſafe poſſeſſion of their eſtates and effects. The harſh and arbitrary tone of the propoſal was mellowed indeed by ſeveral clauſes, eſpecially with the offer to entruſt the ſupreme power, in all military matters, to the king of Navarre; and, in caſe this overture was accepted, the partizans declared themſelves willing and ready, not only to depart from the court, but to go into the moſt diſtant exile from the kingdom. In replying to this ſingular ſpecimen of the artifice and genius of the faction, Monluc aſſiſted the prince of Condé with the ſmarteſt ſtrokes of his pen †. He did not forget to remember the Guiſes, that in this general expurgation of hereſy, which they now, with affected piety, required; it would be expected that they ſhould abjure their late

May 17.

* Thuan. ibid.

† Caſtlenau, ibid.

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acquieſcence in the Auſbourg confeſſion, and that the cardinal ſhould ſign a particular recantation of the heretical opinions he had often vented before the queen regent about the maſs, purgatory, and the invocation of ſaints. Whether queen Catharine, who now had recovered hopes of reſuming her hold of the political balance, acted in concert with the partizans about this remonſtrance, may be reckoned doubtful. The probability is, that ſhe only connived at this diſplay of the temper and principles of the triumvirate, that ſhe might be furniſhed from it with an anſwer to the prince of Condé, when a categorical one from herſelf might be inconvenient. But the part of it which moſt of all pleaſed her, was the propoſition about the party leaders withdrawing, in order to leave the king and her at full liberty. It appears, that ſhe vainly flattered herſelf with the hope of bringing things to this iſſue, and that the chancellor imagined that the counſels of peace and ſubmiſſion might yet be preached with efficacy amidſt the warlike preparations.

The two armies of the catholics and Hugonots being formed,

The aſſemblage of the troops on both ſides, and the collection of the various engines of war at Paris and at Orleans, proclaimed the hoſtile purpoſes of the oppoſite parties. The diligence of the contending chieftains, and their eager endeavours to outſtrip each other in the expedition and maturity of their levies, had already formed two conſiderable armies. That of the courtiers *, commanded by the king of Navarre, conſiſted of ſix thouſand foot and three thouſand horſe. From the ſtores of the arſenal of Paris, which furniſhed a train of artillery, and from the ability of the great lords to provide their military equipage, it was ſoon ready to

* Thuan. ibid. p. 606.

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be put in motion. After an order was iſſued for all proteſtants to quit the city, and the marſhal Briſſac appointed to command in it, the reſolution was formed to march out and take the road towards the enemy. On the other hand, the prince of Condé found it eaſier to draw together a body of men little inferior in number to that of his adverſaries, than to put them in proper condition to take the field. His forces were computed to be ſix thouſand foot, and about two thouſand cavalry. From Tours and ſome of the neareſt cities, which had ſurrendered, he brought the cannon that were tranſportable and could be ſpared to Orleans; which he endeavoured to fortify in the beſt manner he could, and render it his chief place of arms, and the magazine of his troops. A general ſynod, conſiſting of the miniſters and deputies of the proteſtant churches was there aſſembled; in which, beſides the appointment of ſolemn faſts and prayers, the contributions in money neceſſary for defraying the expences of war were agreed upon. The crucifixes and relicts of the catholic churches, which are ſaid to have been turned into coin, proved their readieſt fund of ſpecie. Amongſt their troops there was great alacrity and ardor for immediate action. Though it appeared to be for their advantage to act on the defenſive, yet that it might not be believed that they were ſhut up in Orleans, the leaders determined to advance four leagues from that city, and pitch their camp. By this time the king of Navarre having reached Chaſteaudun, another day's march would have brought him in ſight of the proteſtant army. The queen regent's * apprehenſions that a deciſive action might enſue, and the perplexing view ſhe had of ſuch an event, had ſtirred her ſolicitude, and winged her induſtry, to ſuſpend, by the propoſal of a conference, the approach of

the troops of the former march towards Orleans;

June 1,

* D'Avila, ibid.

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the ominous hour. Having obtained her deſire, it was agreed that ſhe, being accompanied by the king of Navarre and the prince of Condé, attended by the admiral Coligni, ſhould have an interview together, in the middle of a large and open plain near the village of Turi *. Thirty light horſe of either army were appointed to ſcour the campaign all around. The two detachments of a hundred cavaliers, which formed the guard to each party, were ordered to halt at eight hundred paces diſtant; and, leſt a quarrel ſhould ariſe, not to approach a ſtep higher. They ſtood in this poſture when the colloquy began, beholding each other with ſtedfaſt looks; not of averſion, but thoſe of mutual ſympathy and tender regret. Their commanders were obliged to allow them to draw near. They embraced moſt of them, their acquaintance, their companions, their friends, their relations, or their brothers. They deplored the ſavage fury of civil diſcord, that tore aſunder thoſe natural ties of their fellowſhip; and, perhaps in a few hours after this enlivening of thoſe endearments, might oppoſe them in the files of battle, as mortal foes to one another. From this rencounter, the crimſon and the white coats, the catholic and the proteſtant ſoldiers ſeparated with tears in their eyes. The princes in conference appeared to be affected in a different way. They continued together only two hours, and the haſte with which they ſtarted from one another, ſignified their diſagreement. It is ſaid that the queen regent refuſed to engage for the maintainance of the edict of January, though ſhe pretended in this to do violence to her own ſentiments. It was obſerved, that ſhe and the prince converſed ſeparately for half an hour. The letters ſhe had wrote him were an important and intereſting ſubject of private diſcuſſion. The

while the queen procures an interview with the prince of Condé;

* Thuan. ibid. D'Aubigne, ibid.

king

king of Navarre, whoſe intereſt apparently might have been found in a ſcheme of peace, and who, at this juncture, ſeems to have had the power of dictating the terms of it, was become more alienated from his brother, and affectedly opiniative and impracticable about the conditions of an accommodation. BOOK III. 1562.

THE natural effect of this haſty and ill-concerted * congreſs appeared, by inſtances of reſentment and defiance on both ſides. The prince of Condé having reported to the proteſtant chieftains the haughty ſtyle of the confederates, was directed to denounce, in a manner equally peremptory, the only conditions upon which they were diſpoſed to hearken to peace. To this cartel, which ſurpaſſed the ſtrain of all their former requiſitions for the removal of the triumvirate, and the ſtability of the edicts for toleration, and inſiſted for the guarantee of foreign ſtates to the pacification; the courtiers thought it became them to reply, by ſending forth Villars, one of the ſecretaries of ſtate, to play the part of a herald. Taking his ſtation at Eſtampes, half way betwixt Paris and Orleans, he ſummoned the prince of Condé and his adherents within a ſet time, to lay down their arms, and to reſtore the cities they had taken; or, in caſe of refuſal, to expect to be immediately declared rebels, and to have their eſtates and goods confiſcated. This rhodomantade quickened the reſolutions of the commanders in the proteſtant army, to puſh on, without delay, to engage their adverſaries. Being advanced within two leagues of them, freſh meſſengers arrived in their camp, with letters from the queen regent and the king of Navarre, ſoliciting a truce for ſix days, in order to ſet on foot another treaty of accommodation †. By the

which iſſues in a mutual defiance; June 12.

* Caſtelnau, ibid. chap. 10. D'Avila.

† D'Aubigne, ibid.

conceſſion

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conceſſion of this, the prince ſhewed a facility, which was not generally reliſhed in his army. But his laudable propenſity to peace being ever believed conſiſtent with the principles and views of honour; his arguments for the treaty were not oppoſed. At the king of Navarre's deſire, he agreed to give up the town of Baugency, which was reckoned commodious for the reception of the courtiers, who aſſiſted at the conference, and was ſatisfied with a promiſe of its reſtitution, in caſe the propoſals of peace became ineffectual.

but, being again ſet on foot,

The ſcheme, the conduct, and the iſſue of this new congreſs, bore the palpable marks of queen Catharine's political genius, which now, for the firſt time after its late depreſſion, ſeems to have recovered its natural energy. Having heard frequent profeſſions made by the chieftains of both parties, about their diſpoſitions to relinquiſh all ambitious views and conteſts, for the ſake of the public tranquillity; ſhe thought that a handle ſo favourable for a project ought not to be neglected. Having † prevailed with the king of Navarre to co-operate with her in this deſign, which implying the receſs of all the chieftains who rivalled him in authority, could not fail to be acceptable, and engaged him to write letters to the prince of Condé, full of unuſual expreſſions of regard and kindneſs; ſhe truſted to her own management, and the addreſs of Monluc, the biſhop of Valence, to perform the reſt. The firſt ſtep of her negotiation was to perſuade the triumvirate to refute all the objections to their unwarrantable uſurpation of the government, by agreeing to withdraw from the court, upon condition that the prince of Condé ſhould conſent to diſband his army. What

† Caſtelneau, ibid. chap. 11.

powerful

powerful arguments ſhe could employ to effectuate this point, can be beſt underſtood from a juſt conſideration of the caſe, and of the character of thoſe who were to be induced to make, in earneſt, ſuch a ſubmiſſion. D'Avila's expoſition of the reaſoning, by which he ſuppoſes the queen prevailed, forms a political flouriſh, which cannot be imagined productive of the effect. He * ſets out with affirming, that queen Catharine, by not taking flight at the conference with the prince of Condé to the camp of the proteſtants, had entirely recovered credit and favour with the triumvirate. To ſuppoſe her commenced immediately a confident of the party, becauſe ſhe did not prove a fugitive from it, is a vague and precarious inference. Yet all the alledged reaſons, which ſeem very little calculated to have made the intended impreſſions on the three partizans, depend upon this preſumption. One argument, which is hinted at, may indeed be allowed to have conſiderable force. She gave them aſſurances, according to the ſame author, that their exile from the court ſhould not be long. If we ſuppoſe, what will only diminiſh, for the ſake of credibility, the glare of queen Catherine's policy, that they underſtood it as a fixed point that their abſence was only to be momentary, until ſhe had tried by her artifice to bring the prince of Condé under engagements to ſeparate from his army; the obſcure tranſaction may be comprehended. But whether, as a colour to her ſtratagem, or in the view of prompting a ſolid accommodation, certain it is, that the conceſſion of the triumvirs to a retreat was obtained by queen Catharine. Having fixed this nice point, ſhe knew how to turn it to the moſt advantage. She employed the biſhop of Valence and the ſecretary Robertette to communicate her firſt propoſals about it to the prince of Condé,

gives occaſion to the queen to ſhew her diſſimulation.

* Liv. iii.

which

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and her artificial conduct.

which were made in a manner that ſerved to confirm him in the perſuaſion he had, that this preliminary condition would not readily be fulfilled. It being, however, underſtood and ſtipulated as the baſis of agreement, the prince was not reſerved in his declaration *. He offered, upon the removal of the three partizans, to come and deliver himſelf as a hoſtage, for the punctual performance of all due obedience and ſubmiſſion from his adherents to the commands of the king. The envoys deſired to have this promiſe reduced to writing, and that it might be expreſſed as the common ſuffrage of the principal men in the prince's army. In this alſo they prevailed, though the inaccurate and general terms of the paper, in which even the maintainance of the edict of January was not particularized, ſhewed a ſimplicity, of which negotiators with queen Catharine might find reaſon to repent. About the end of June, when the days of truce were almoſt expired, the ſigned acceptance of the cartel by the queen and the king of Navarre, with the royal ſignet affixed to it, was tranſmitted to the prince of Condé; and, the day following, he was advertiſed that the duke of Guiſe, the conſtable, and the marſhal St. André, according to the terms of it, had departed from the king and the army.

UNEXPECTED as this tranſaction was, and involved in myſtery, the prince of Condé thought himſelf obliged to proceed upon the ſuppoſition of the integrity of thoſe with whom he treated. He ſet out for Baugency, and from thence to Talſi, where he was waited for by the queen mother to finiſh the accommodation. Her reception of him had the moſt amicable ſhew; and he obtained permiſſion for ſome of his chief adherents to attend the determina-

* Thuan. ibid.

tion

tion of the agreement. Matters being brought nearer to a criſis, they began to reflect on what had paſſed. They learned that the triumvirs had ſtopt ſhort at Chateaudun, which was only five leagues diſtant. What obligation they had come under to remain ſeparate from the king, had not been ſpecified nor enquired after *. Suſpicions aroſe, which intercepted letters indirectly confirmed, that deceit and treachery were intended. As thoſe admonitions were ſtill indiſtinct, and the biſhop of Valence exerted his art in obviating all objections, the prince of Condé, who relied too much on his advice, entertained the beſt hopes of the final event. His friends, however, thought it high time to ſuperintend the deciſion. The counts of Rochefoucault and de Grammont, Genlis, Soubiſe and Piennis, repaired to Talfi. The queen mother was moſt liberal in her expreſſions of reſpect to them all. But after the prince of Condé had opened the ſubject of the interview, he was amazed with the queen mother's declaring it to be a neceſſary preliminary to the compact of peace, that there ſhould be only one religion publicly adminiſtered in the kingdom. Scarcely believing ſhe ſpoke in earneſt, while the ingenuous commotion he felt prompted an ardent reply; he found no ſtronger manner of teſtifying his inviolable adherence, and that of his aſſociates, to the fundamental point of the edict of toleration, than by avowing again and again that he and they would rather purchaſe it by a voluntary baniſhment of themſelves from the kingdom. The queen, as if ſhe only waited for ſuch a declaration, immediately took hold of it, and ſaid; that ſince there was no other likely means of putting an end to violent contention, ſhe would accept the offer they propoſed; and that ſhe hoped, when they had made their exit, not only to

* Caſtelnau, ibid. chap. 11.

Book III. 1562. allay the ſtorm of civil diſcord, but to be able to reconcile the catholics to the eſtabliſhment of the edict of January. Great was the ſurpriſe, which the prince of Condé and his friends witneſſed at this ſpeech. They could only look confuſed upon one another, without attempting to reply. Catharine continued to infiſt on the neceſſity of the meaſure, and aſſured them, that as a little time would be ſufficient to releaſe them from their exile, ſhe apprehended the term of it might ſtill be ſhortened, in caſe the king's majority ſhould be conteſted by any faction; and with this the interview concluded. Though it is evident, upon review, that the whole procedure on the part of queen Catharine, was nothing but a chain of circumvention, in which unguarded ingenuity was over-reached by craft; yet the prince of Condé, the object of the deluſion, and together with his party the ſufferer by it, was ſuppoſed to have laid himſelf under the obligation of honour to perform a promiſe raſhly incurred, injurious to his friends, and inconſiſtent with the end for which it was given. It affords an evident proof of the opinion entertained of his integrity, by thoſe who had no ſuch delicate ſenſe of it, that they believed him capable both of being inveigled by their artifices, and embarraſſed by the effect of them, when apparent. The councils of the chieftains of the army, to weigh the import of the engagement, and their ſolicitude to vindicate the prince and themſelves from the imputation of perfidy, are circumſtances that ſhew in what eſteem the principles of honour and truth were held among them. But by the concurring ſuffrages of the * principal officers, without the proteſtant miniſters interpoſing their caſuiſtry, the prince's engagement was determined to be null and void. To ſatisfy the nice ſcruples of the

* D'Aubigne, ibid. Thuan.

prince

prince himſelf, it was agreed next day, when Robertette came, to demand the fulfilment of his promiſe, that he ſhould go attended by his friends, and preſent himſelf before the queen. After ſome altercations and intreaties were employed to detain him, having aſked her majeſty's liberty to return to his camp, and appearing to ſuffer the compulſion of his attendants, he was re-conducted in the midſt of them to his army, which received him with acclamations of joy. Such was the reſult of queen Catharine's laſt eſſay to oppoſe the combat of the armies, and, in the criſis of action, to ſuſpend the authority of the chiefs of the oppoſite parties; an attempt ineffectual and vain, which could not have had the ſmalleſt progreſs without a double impoſition; by the triumvir's being aſſured that ſhe was attached to their intereſt, and by the ſame diſſimulation with the prince of Condé, and then by drawing the feeble knot of an artificial engagement upon both, in the abſurd hope of retaining them by means of it, in ſubjection to her dictates. The biſhop of Valence, confident no leſs than queen Catharine was, in the reach of his political art, and equally adverſe to the power of the triumvirs, aſſiſted her in fabricating the unſubſtantial device.

THE chieftains of the prince's army being provoked with the ſeveral deluſive interviews, and ſenſible of their tendency to damp the ardor of their beſt ſoldiers, and convinced that their enemies, who expected ſome foreign troops, ſought the advantage of delay, were now determined to compenſate for their heſitation by ſtriking an immediate blow. A night attack was reſolved upon; to the trial of which, the diſperſion of the enemy's cavalry through the villages, the abſence of the duke of Guiſe and the conſtable, and the probability of finding the king of Navarre unprepared, contributed to invite and encourage them. The diſpoſition of the troops

The armies being put in motion,

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was ſettled in the following manner *. The admiral Coligni, with eight hundred horſemen, was appointed to lead the van, and to charge the enemy's cavalry in their different quarters. He was to be followed by d'Andelot, at the head of twelve hundred foot, arquebuſſers, divided into four battalions, who were to engage the infantry, while another body of eight hundred, attended by two ſquadrons of lances, ſuſtained them, and endeavoured to make themſelves maſters of the artillery. The rear, conſiſting of a thouſand cavalry, and the main body of the foot, was conducted by the prince of Condé. The project appeared to promiſe ſucceſs; but, from the miſchances to which this ſort of enterprize is generally liable, the proper execution of it was prevented. From the confuſion or infidelity of their guides, the whole night was ſpent in traverſe marches; and, at the break of day, they found they had not advanced above a league from the place of their encampment. Though ſenſible they had miſſed their aim, they puſhed on near two leagues further, and reached the firſt poſts of the enemy. Henry d'Amville, the conſtable's ſon, who commanded in the front of the army, had diſcovered their approach; and, having given the alarm by firing two pieces of cannon, he made the beſt diſpoſition the time allowed to receive their charge. While they marched ſlower, and thickened their ranks, the king of Navarre was alert in ranging his troops. After ſome ſkirmiſhes, they ſaw it neceſſary to form the line of battle. For two hours the armies faced one another; but the commanders on both ſides appeared, with mutual conſent, to decline a general engagement, and, after ſome cannonading, the prince of Condé drew off his troops, and took up his quarters in the village of Lorges, about a league diſtant. The three chief-

a night attack is reſolved on by the proteſtant chiefs,

which fails.

* Ibid. D'Aubigne. D'Avila,

tains

tains being ſent for to Chateaudun, arrived that evening in the catholic camp; and, being acquainted of the night aſſault intended by the enemy, gave orders to prepare large piles of wood, and to diſperſe them along the front of the camp; that being ſet on fire, in caſe the like attempt was renewed, the diſorder ariſing from darkneſs might be avoided. When the prince of Condé received intelligence of their arrival, and of theſe diſpoſitions made by them, he decamped on the ſecond of July and took his root to Beaugency.

In this manner did the civil war commence in France, upon a footing the more ominous and deſperate, ſince from the beginning of this reign, all the endeavours of the government, from neceſſity directed to peace, and the reſtraining of the animoſities of the parties, had been counteracted, and the edict of January, deſigned as an expedient for concord, had almoſt without a trial of its efficacy been made the fewel of contention. The pretence of religious motives, or the actual prevalence of enthuſiaſm, overwhelming the ſenſe of obedience to the civil authority; and private and perſonal quarrels inflaming the public diſſenſions; the ſtate and kingdom were threatened with all the diſmal conſequences that might be expected from the conflict of ſuch enraged adverſaries. The party which, having poſſeſſed themſelves of the young king's perſon, and, together with his authority, aſſumed the appellation of the royaliſts, was yet hardly diſtinguiſhed by that title, but rather by that of the catholics *. Together with the appearance of the queen regent on their ſide, they had the authority of the parliament of Paris, and that of almoſt all the other courts, the favour and aid of the metropolis, the ſanction of the church, and the voice of the

* Thuan. ibid. p. 607.

populace.

Book III. 1562. populace. Their military ſtrength conſiſted in the aſſociation of the chief lords of the court, in the retention of the greateſt part of the old regiments, in their more immediate acceſs to the revenues of the crown, and the hopes of foreign aſſiſtance. The other party, upon which their adverſaries had affixed the name of Hugonots, had, beſides the general reputation of their cauſe, that appeared to be of common concern to other proteſtant ſtates, the affiance and protection of a prince of the blood, to whom the queen regent, by the letters ſhe wrote, had applied for the vindication of her authority, and the king's ſafety, and the redreſs of the ſtate; and who profeſſed to have taken up arms for the maintainance of thoſe ſtatutes, which the government had eſtabliſhed, and a faction ſtrove to ſubvert. The great number of inferior nobility engaged in the cauſe from the motive of religion, the cordial attachment of the ſoldiers to it from the ſame principle, and the remarkable genius and induſtry of their commanders, and the probability of their receiving ſupplies from abroad, conſtituted their chief power and ability to take the field, and to proſecute the war againſt their numerous opponents.

CHAP. V.

1562.

Foreign hiſtory—Of the Netherlands—Of the court of Rome—Of Scotland and England—Of Germany—Treaty of Hampton Court.

Foreign hiſtory: commencement of the civil wars. State of the Netherlands.

WHILE France thus became the theatre of civil war, the other contiguous powers of Europe preſerved their former condition of tranquillity. In the Belgic provinces, however, the ſeeds of diſaffection to the Spaniſh government began to appear. From the moſt antient times, the people of thoſe countries had never brookt a foreign yoke; and, in a later * period, the diverſity of the laws, cuſtoms, manners, and privileges of the great cities, contributing to promote their natural love of liberty, they had not been reduced into a ſtate of ſubjection, or been governed as vaſſals with an arbitrary ſway, by the princes of the houſe of Burgundy, or other potentates, who claimed the ſovereign power over them. Under the emperor Charles V. the government of the Netherlands continued to be adminiſtered upon principles more ſuited to a popular conſtitution than to a principality. The ſtates general of the provinces were often convened for granting public ſubſidies; the provincial governors were choſen out of the Belgic nobility; and the garriſons in the cities, and the body of the militia, were compoſed of the low countrymen. Upon the acceſſion of Philip to the ſovereignty of the Netherlands, the ſcheme of converting many abbeys into biſhoprics, and of increaſing the number of the latter from four to eighteen, together with the inclination that monarch ſhewed to continue four thouſand Spaniſh † ſoldiers in

Number of biſhoprics increaſed.

* Mem. de Comines, liv. iii. chap. 3. Strada, lib. i.

† Strada, lib. ii. Thuan. lib. xxvii.

the

BOOK III. 1562. the garriſons of Brabant, was ſufficient to provoke jealouſy and diſcontent, both in the minds of the nobility and of the people. It was evident that, by this innovation in the eccleſiaſtical conſtitution, he meant to pave the way for the erection of the inquiſitorial tribunals, and to employ them with more rigour than he had done in Spain, for ſubverting the civil privileges of the people in the Low Countries. The hated name of thoſe judicatories, and the advancement of cardinal Granvelle to precedency of place and office in the cabinet council, and the perceptible influence he had in all the affairs of ſtate, furniſhed freſh occaſions of murmuring to the Belgic lords. When, according to Philip's commands, the edicts for the ſuppreſſion of hereſy were revived; ſeveral of the nobles, in hatred of Granvelle, as well as from a propenſity to religious liberty, ſhewed themſelves cool and averſe to the execution of them; and, while the magiſtrates of ſome of the cities attempted to puniſh the open contempt of the proclamations againſt heretical preachers, the unſubmiſſive ſpirit of the people ſoon braved the feeble reſtraints of the civil authority. The cities of Liſle, Tournay, and Valencienes, which were moſt adjacent to France, afforded the firſt examples of thoſe popular commotions. In the * laſt of them, two Calviniſt preachers had been apprehended; and, after being impriſoned for ſeveral months, were, with ſome caution to avoid a tumult, led forth to be burnt at the ſtake. Though the break of day was choſen for it, an unuſual multitude flocked to the place of execution. When one of the priſoners, as he approached the faggots, lifted up his voice in fervent prayers; the populace, ſhouting aloud, diſcharged a volley of ſtones upon the officers, and ruſhing forward, in a moment diſperſed the inſtruments of death. In the midſt of the confuſion, with difficulty

Popular commotions in the cities.

* Strada, lib iii.

were

were the priſoners carried off by the officers, and lodged again in the jail. The people, without a leader, undetermined in their purpoſes, began a vocal concert of the French Pſalms. When this diſtinctive note of their party was heard, numbers joined in their compoſed march through the ſtreets. Increaſed to more than two thouſand, they ſtill attempted no act of violence, nor any ruder diſturbance than the warbling of their pſalmody. At length, with ſome more precipitation, they haſtened to the jail; and having forced the doors, and reſcued their two condemned brethren, without allowing the other priſoners to eſcape, they ſent a meſſage to the magiſtrates, that, having delivered their friends from an unjuſt ſentence, they deſired only to be exempted from proſecutions for religion, and that they ſought no future occaſions of interpoſing, in the manner they now had done, on account of them.

Dutcheſs of Parma diſpoſed to moderate meaſures about religion.

To oppoſe the introduction of the ſupernumerary biſhops, the abbots joined with the lords, who were diſguſted with the miniſtry of Granvelle, and both united their efforts to engage the aſſembly of the ſtates to diſappoint his meaſures. The dutcheſs of Parma, diſpoſed to copy the moderate maxims of her father Charles V. found it difficult to ſupport Granvelle * in the proſecution of his arbitrary rules, and to preſerve that degree of popularity, which was neceſſary to the peaceable government of the provinces. Philip, confident in the fertile reſources of his policy, endeavoured, from the receſſes of his cabinet, to obviate thoſe growing diſorders, at one time, by declaring his deſign to re-viſit the Netherlands, and at another, by contriving to diſunite the Belgic nobility, or, by appearing to favour their petitions, to engage the principal con-

* Thuan. ibid. p. 560.

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federates among them to truſt their perſons at the court of Spain. Though the diviſions of France were rather agreeable to his political views, he could not help being alarmed at the cauſe of them, whence an inference might be drawn as to what was to be expected in the Low Countries. He ſent orders for the march of two thouſand horſe from Flanders, to the aſſiſtance of the catholic party; but the governeſs, perceiving this meaſure to be liable to various objections, prevailed to have the ſupply changed into a ſum of money. Two thouſand foot from Italy, and as many from Spain, followed by fifteen hundred horſe, were the ſuccours he furniſhed: but ſeveral months elapſed before they arrived in France.

Of the court of Rome.

THE reiterated inſtances of the emperor Ferdinand I. joined to the intereſting procedure about religious matters in France, proved at length invincible motives with Pius IV. to authorize the * convocation of a general council. The propoſed indiction of it, under the title of a continuation of the former one at Trent, was diſreliſhed, both by the imperial and the French court. It was alledged, that this would weaken the authority of its deciſions, and occaſion the immediate rejection of it by the proteſtants, who had generally diſowned the preceding council. The pope, unwilling to relinquiſh the auſpicious foundation, which had been already laid, endeavoured to overcome thoſe objections, by conceiving the order of convocation in more general terms; which, after ſome diſputes, were acquieſced in. The genius of the court of Rome, now prompted to the utmoſt exertion of its defenſive powers, ſuſtained its matchleſs reputation for artificial conduct. Every ſtep to be taken demanded mature counſel and circumſpection. That no diſguſt or offence might be created, it behoved his holineſs to

Re-convocation of the council of Trent reſolved upon.

* Matthieu, liv. v. p. 290. D'Aubigne, liv. iii. chap. 21.

ſtudy critically the forms of addreſs that were to be uſed, and the precedencies, in honour and titulary dignity, to be given by him to the different ſovereigns and princes of Europe. It was found impoſſible that theſe formalities could be adjuſted in an unexceptionable way, unleſs by only * naming the emperor in the bull of convocation, and comprehending the reſt under the general addreſs of all the chriſtian princes of Europe. The choice of the legates to be diſpatched to the different courts of the chriſtian princes, and the proper inſtructions to be given them, when attendance and ſubmiſſion to the council were to be recommended, required the diligence and judgment of the conclave. In Germany, where the power and influence of the proteſtant princes proved a check upon Ferdinand, the two principal envoys employed were, the biſhop of Déphare and the cardinal Commendon. After preſenting their credentials to the emperor, they were adviſed by him to take the opportunity of ſounding the reſolutions of the proteſtant chiefs, who were then aſſembled at Nambourg in Saxony. Deference to the pleaſure of the emperor, who ſent commiſſioners along with them to impart his requeſt, and facilitate their admiſſion to the meeting of the princes, prevailed with the legates to undertake this office, different as it was from their inſtructions; which directed them to make ſeparate applications to the ſeveral electors, who eſpouſed the Auſbourg confeſſion. Upon their arrival, being honourably conducted into the aſſembly, their harangues were heard, and the bulls relative to the council, and the briefs from the pope, addreſt to each of the princes, were received †. In a few hours after they had retired from this audience, three

Arrival of the pope's legates in Germany.

* Thuan. lib. xxviii. p. 578.

† Matthieu, ibid. Gratianus, vie du Commendon, liv. ii.

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deputies came to their lodgings, and returned the pontifical miſſives, with the ſeals unopened; telling them, in the name of the aſſembly, that the pope having inſcribed theſe letters to his beloved ſons, they, who acknowledged him not as their ſpiritual father, had neither the freedom nor privilege to receive them. This repulſe did not diſcourage thoſe aſſiduous envoys from traverſing the proteſtant ſtates, and accoſting other princes of the Lutheran perſuaſion. In the circuit they performed of all the courts and principalities of Germany, their addreſs and abilities equalled their zeal. Commendon proceeded to the coaſt of the Baltic, to execute his apoſtolic miſſion to the kings of Sweden and Denmark. The ſame ſpirit of enterpriſe, emulation, and vigilance, for the repairing the bulwarks of the church of Rome, diſtinguiſhed her other able emiſſaries.

Jan. 1562. The council of Trent meets.

THE firſt diet of the celebrated council of Trent was opened upon the eighteenth of January: Compoſed chiefly of the Italian prelates, and ſome biſhops from Spain, it ſhewed a paſſive countenance until the Imperial and French ambaſſadors appeared. Diſputes then commenced about declaring the council a new one: Demands were made to poſtpone the diſcuſſion of the articles of faith, till the council became more frequented; and the ideas of the ſuperlative authority of a general council to that of the papal chair being recollected, the deſire of ſhining in a great aſſembly, and the freedom of wit in the public interviews, encouraged argumentation upon thoſe dangerous topics. While the public confuſions of France detained many of her prelates, and the late conduct of the court appeared ſuſpicious; and the emperor, intent upon the deſign of having his ſon elected king of the Romans, was diſpoſed to preſerve a good underſtanding with the proteſtants; the court of Rome was

thrown

thown into diſmay, and beheld, with a fearful eye, the daring operation to which ſhe had ſtretched her hands. But, from the progreſs made, in the face of apparent danger, by her partizans in the council, ſhe found her own ſtrength; and truſted, that perſiſtance in the wiſe exerciſe of it would crown her toils with ſucceſs.

Affairs of Scotland and England.

A SHORT time before the congreſs of Poiſſi, the dowager of Francis II. Mary queen of Scots, had taken her departure into her native kingdom. During her huſband's reign, an object of jealouſy to the queen mother *, who always feared the predominancy of her influence with Francis; and, from her peculiar circumſtances, obſequious, and made ſubvervient to the counſels and deſigns of her uncles the Guiſes; ſhe was conſtrained by various motives to forgo her private taſte and inclination, which diſpoſed her to prefer a reſidence in France, to the public renown of ſwaying the ſcepter in Scotland. The cardinal of Lorain's ſchemes with reſpect to her were too much compounded of vanity, to admit of her thus abſenting from her ſphere of royalty. Upon the firſt motions for her journey to Scotland, the prelude of diſcord with the queen of Engl nd appeared. The demand of the ratification of the treaty of Edinburgh by Elizabeth not being complied with, nor the invitation to take the court of London in her way accepted; the Engliſh ſhips put to ſea to intercept her paſſage. From the conjuncture of civil and eccleſiaſtical affairs in Scotland, and ſome peculiarities in the ſtate of parties in England, the miſunderſtanding between the two neighbouring queens, was alſo aggravated †. The late obligations by treaty, under which the adherents to the reformation in Scotland were laid by Elizabeth, and even the ſenſe the

Return of Mary, dowager of Francis II. into her own kingdom.

* Addit. aux Caſtelnau, liv. i. chap. 284. Brantome Eloge.

† Matthieu, liv. iv. p. 230.

people

Book III. 1562. people in general retained of her favourable aſſiſtance in expelling the French, had created a correſpondence with the Engliſh court, and formed an attachment of ſome of the Scotiſh lords to the political views of the Engliſh queen, that would be looked upon with a ſuſpicious eye by Mary; when ſhe came, attended by ſome of the nobility of France, to undertake the government of her kingdom. Before her arrival, the convention of the ſtates had refuſed to diſſolve the treaty with England; and the abbeys and monaſteries through the kingdom being demoliſhed, the revenues of the church had been wholly ſeized and greedily graſped by the nobility. The reformed church eſtabliſhed in the nation, being left deſtitute for ſome time of a temporal proviſion for her miniſters, and with difficulty, at length, allowed an alms inſtead of a ſubſiſtance, had ſtill cauſe to dread tribulation from the rancour and fierceneſs of the northern catholics. Beſides Mary's attachment to the popiſh religion, her intereſt, with reſpect to the ſucceſſion of the crown of England, proved a particular inducement to her to value the friendſhip of the catholics, and maintain a political connexion with that party in both kingdoms. Her endeavours to obtain a releaſe from the ſtipulation at Edinburgh, which appeared injurious to her claim, by propoſing that her right to aſcend the Engliſh throne upon Elizabeth's deceaſe without progeny, ſhould be declared, touched the queen of England on a point where ſhe was moſt ſenſible to animoſity. In this ſituation of affairs, a ſincere or laſting amity between the two allied queens could hardly be expected. The court of France *, after the death of Mary's royal conſort, had abandoned the ſcheme of ſupporting the catholics in Scotland, and even ſhewed ſmall concern in what related to

The ſcheme of ſupporting the catholics in Scotland relinquiſhed by France.

* Caſtelnau, ibid.

that

that queen; but the direction of her counſels being the more reſigned to the cardinal of Lorain, Elizabeth ceaſed not to conſider her in the light of a competitor, who once had aſſumed the enſigns of her royalty, and might ſtill be inſtigated by the family of Guiſe to follow the ſhadow of thoſe vaſt projects they had planned for her exaltation. Yet thoſe eruptions of mutual diſtruſt being ſuſpended for a time, Elizabeth began to obſerve with attention the ſcene that paſſed in France, which from various conſiderations ſeemed intereſting to her. Her political ſituation, added to religious motives, rendered her the general protectreſs of the proteſtants. In the commencement of the reformation, while it ſtruggled for eſtabliſhment in Britain, and other ſtates; expoſed to the hatred of the catholic powers of Europe, and menaced by the court of Rome; ſhe found it neceſſary to lay hold of every weapon of defence, and avail herſelf of all fit opportunities to turn aſide, or weaken the combination of ſo many formidable enemies. Upon her late interpoſition in the affairs of Scotland, ſhe had not only made the ambition of the Guiſes the argument of her manifeſtos, but adopted the principles and ſtyle of the oppoſite party, in a manner ſo keen and animated, as ſhewed her natural adherence to it. It ſeemed, therefore, a point to be preſumed, that an application from the proteſtants in France would diſpoſe Elizabeth to eſpouſe their intereſt, and grant them aſſiſtance.

Of Germany.

WHEN the contending parties in France prepared to take the field, each of them endeavoured to ſolicit the favour and aid of forein ſtates. In the firſt motions for this meaſure, which afterwards accumulated the miſeries of the ſtate, the queen regent and her confederates ſhewed themſelves more forward and leſs ſcrupulous than the prince of Condé and his adherents. Catherine,

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rine *, a ſtranger herſelf, and the Guiſes diſpoſed to extend their foreign connexions, had in the former reign made the alliance with Spain their fort; and, now in the dangers of civil war, Philip was immediately engaged to ſupport them. A body of Swiſs was contracted for, and a bargain ſtruck with Philip, count of the Rhine, and the German captain Rokendolf, to furniſh their mercenary bands. The † moſt of thoſe German troops, which were called Rhaiters and Lanſquenets, were compoſed of proteſtants, and the Rhingrave himſelf was of this profeſſion; the point of religion was weighed but as duſt in the balance by the German ſoldiers of fortune, when they ſettled their lucrative cartels. The empire, ſubdivided into various principalities, independent of one another, and connected chiefly by their common language, ſupplied, as it hath continued ſince to do, a hord of ſtipendiary militia for Europe. Induſtry and the arts being uncultivated among the people, neceſſity and intereſt obliged them to make arms their trade. Their ſeveral princes and chiefs, the detached members of the empire, retained their ſoldiers to be hired out at a ſet price, for the harveſt of foreign expeditions. Thus was Germany, both the model and the nurſery of the feudal ſyſtem in Europe. The catholics in France, more potent in treaſure than their adverſaries, quickly obtained the levies of men they deſired. The Rhingrave, and and Baſſompiere his lieutenant, having ſtipulated for their levy-money, at the rate of twelve florins a horſe, were prepared to march with ten cornets of cavalry; and, together with their officers, obliged themſelves, by oath, to ſerve the crown of France and thoſe with whom they contracted, againſt all the world but the holy empire and their feudal lords; and not to quit their regiments,

German levies become the reſource of the catholics and proteſtants in France.

* Addit. aux Caſtel. liv. iii. chap. 13. † Caſtel. liv. iv. chap. 11.

though

though recalled by the emperor, the chamber imperial, or their feudalchiefs. The Swiſs colonel Freulich had alſo completed his appointed muſter of ſix thouſand foot, from the cantons. All theſe foreign auxiliaries were engaged to march into France; while the prince of Condé had only attempted, by letters to the emperor, and to Wolfang count Palatine, and other proteſtant princes, to juſtify his aſſumption of arms *. The iſſue of a council held at Orleans, about the procuring of German ſuccours, which is related upon ſufficient authority, affords a remarkable proof of the reſerve and reluctance of his party, to embark in this expedient; and redounds to the honour of the admiral Coligni. He ſtrongly oppoſed it, and declared he would ſooner be put to death, than agree that the proteſtants ſhould be the firſt who introduced the Germans into France. It was determined that two agents ſhould be ſent into Germany, to intreat the proteſtant princes to mediate between them and their opponents; and with inſtructions, only to prevent what might be undertaken in the empire to their prejudice; and they were appointed to limit their procedure to this courſe, until, upon a variation of conjunctures, other orders might be communicated to them. The conduct of the catholics having ſoon furniſhed them with an argument for relaxing their rules; Briquemant and the Vidame of Chartres, were diſpatched into England, and ſome time after, d'Andelot went to ſolicit relief in the empire. The Engliſh queen having admitted the commiſſioners to make their propoſals, gave them all encouragement to expect her aſſiſtance. But the conditions ſhe annexed to it confounded them. This princeſs, who had yielded Calais at the general peace, under the appearance of reſerving her claim to it,

Commiſſioners from the proteſtants ſent into England.

* Poppliniere cited by P. Daniel, tom. v. p. 741.

BOOK III. 1562. thought ſhe might now, by another kind of tranſaction, reſume the poſſeſſion of that fortreſs, without being obliged to contend about this political refinement deviſed by her in the treaty *. She inſiſted therefore, that Havre de Grace, of which the prince of Condé's party were maſters, ſhould be delivered into her power, to be kept by her for the king of France, with an evident intention of making it her pledge for the recovery of Calais. Struck with the ungenerous propoſition, which threw a ſtain upon thoſe with whom ſhe deſired to unite herſelf, and ſenſible of the general obloquy and reproach into which its acceptance would expoſe them; the chief counſellors of the party appeared reſolute in rejecting it; notwithſtanding Elizabeth offered, by formal treaty with them, to tranſport immediately into France ſix thouſand of her beſt troops, and to contribute a hundred and forty thouſand crowns to the expences of the war. The negotiation was ſuſpended for a ſpace of time. Elizabeth, who judged that neceſſity, which over-rules all maxims, would bring them to a ſubmiſſion to her terms, was poſitive in refuſing to make any abatement. When † the prince of Condé, unable to keep the field with his troops, was on the point of being ſhut up in Orleans; on the eighteenth of September, the treaty of Hampton-court was ſigned. In this manner did both the catholics and proteſtants conſpire to augment the ſcourge of civil war, and to perpetuate it, by drawing armies of foreign powers into the kingdom.

Elizabeth makes the treaty of Hampton-court with the proteſtant chiefs, September 18th,

* Caſtelnau, ibid. † Thuan. lib. xxxii. p. 665.

END of the FIRST VOLUME.

ERRATA in Vol. I.

Page 17. line 10. for Repin, read *Pepin.*
22. for Deliderius, read *Deſiderius.*
23. 8. dele, *that of.*
26. 3. dele, *has.*
17. for A ſtate, read *A taſte.*
27. 25. for offering, read *offſpring.*
52. 1. for model, read *mode.*
82. 9. for from, read *of.*
103. 2. for haſty and a, read *a haſty and.*
104. 9. for Braſil, read *Baſil.*
141. 20. for feudal, read *the feudal.*
150. 4. for him, read *them.*
161. 10. for carefully, read *careleſsly.*
163. 22. for Caraff, read *Caraffi.*
169. 15. for exerciſe, read *excite.*
170. 23. for Henry, read *hereſy.*
171. 3. for jealous, read *zealous.*
174. 3. for monarch, read *monarchy.*
179. 25. for called, read *calculated.*
184. 26. for than, read *that.*
198. 12. put a full ſtop after *cauſe.*
205. 16. for du Bury, read *du Bourg.*
214. 6. for compatible, read *incompatible.*
215. 15. dele, *frequent.*
221. 20. for all, read *half.*
233. 22. for altitude, read *attitude.*
234. 5. for of, read *on.*
236. 9. for advices, read *devices.*
23. for availed, read *prevailed.*
246. 7. for rules, read *roots.*
270. 1. for encounter, read *encourage.*
272. 1. for inclined, read *declined.*
301. 1. for word, read *words.*
310. 17. for provinces, read *princes.*
325. 14. for the beaſts, read *the beaſt.*
330. 19. for argument, read *arguments.*
331. 21. for This man was, read *who was.*
333. 22. for having, read *and having.*
351. 8. for was, read *was not.*
366. 12. for Charles VIII. read *Charles* VII.
375. 26. for deplorable, read *misfortunes deplorable.*
379. 17. for adminiſtration, read *admiration.*
26. dele *the.*
381. 19. for was the wardſhip, read *was to aſſign the wardſhip.*
20. dele *to aſſign.*
388. 15. for ſpeaker, read *ſpeaker for the nobles.*
398. 16. for pack, read *patch.*
425. 19. for ſuppoſed, read *propoſed.*
448. 16. for ſatisfying, read *ſignifying.*
463. 19. for limited, read *unlimited.*
476. 9. for higher, read *nigher.*
479. 21. for prompting, read *promoting.*

In the proper names in a few places, read *Tournon, Deſſe Epanvilliers, Vatable, Briçonnet, Etienne.*

